

Day of meetings leaves Prime Minister with sporting chance of staving off election

The Prime Minister was considered yesterday to have a sporting chance of victory in the vote of confidence in the Commons tomorrow, staving off a general election. He had talks with leaders of the Liberals and the United Ulster

Labour's conscience 'will not be sacrificed'

David Wood
Mr Callaghan still had a sporting chance of winning Wednesday's vote of confidence in the Commons, and the Government from a general election, after his private discussions at the House yesterday with leaders of the Liberal Party and the United Ulster Unionist Party.

He does not need to win positive votes in the 13 Liberal and eight Ulster UUPs. If the groups split, or solidly join, it will be enough to save the Government when the division bells ring at 10pm tomorrow.

To adapt the words of Sir Winston Churchill when he became Prime Minister in 1940, it could be said that the whole of Mr Callaghan's political and trading life has been a preparation for the day he now has in saving his minority Government from a general election at a time not of his own choosing. Nobody has known Mr Callaghan in Westminster since 1945 those who he is one of the most accomplished negotiators and survivors of his generation. Nobody knows except at second or third hand what precisely passed between Mr Callaghan and the leaders of the minority parties he saw last night: first, Mr James Molyneux, leader of the UUs and still disenchanted member of the Conservative Party's central council; and secondly Mr Steel, leader of the Liberals.

On his return to Westminster last night on the Stachford by-election campaign, Mr Steel spent an hour with Mr Callaghan in the Prime Minister's room discussing conditions on which Liberal support could be thrown in the Government's scales.

Mr Steel had made his terms public in television broadcast on Sunday, and he appears to have restated them. It may be significant that neither side suggested that further meeting is in prospect for today. The drift of the Prime Minister's confidence is clear, though adjusted for any particular audience. He told the liaison committee of the TUC and the Labour Party in the morning, for example, in the presence of six Cabinet ministers and the chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, that "we are going to win, but the party's conscience will not be sacrificed in any discussions with minority groups".

What else could he say?

Mr Callaghan apparently phrased his thinking rather differently when he met Mr Steel and Mr Molyneux. He might have mentioned his socialist conscience, or he was more intent on making the point that Mrs Thatcher would be a poor change for himself.

As he explained, the Prime Minister led the Government in on a minority in the House of Commons had to adjust to political realities, and therefore it could be taken for granted that he was prepared to help in the search for "an accommodation" with the smaller groups in the Commons whose votes are necessary to keep the Government in office.

The Government, Mr Callaghan argues, as already in a clear minority, and had been obliged to trim its sails accordingly.

On other pages

Win or lose tomorrow night, Mr Healey is still likely to go ahead with the Budget statement next Tuesday 21.

The prospect of a Government defeat wiped more than £1,300m off share values on the Stock Exchanges yesterday. The Financial Times index closed 14.1 lower at 414.4.

Sterling made a shaky start yesterday and the Bank of England is thought to have given some support. However, it rallied later and closed at \$1.7177, a net gain of five points 21.

The TUC-Labour Party liaison committee has swung the full weight of the unions behind Mr Callaghan's determination to stay in power 2.

Mr Steel said he had no "shopping list" of demands to put to the Prime Minister regarding tomorrow's confidence vote 2.

Mr James Molyneux, leader of the UUs, and Mr Enoch Powell, MP for Down, South, met Mr Callaghan and Mr Foot for an hour 2.

As the consultations went on at Westminster, party organizers began to prepare for a snap election 2.

It had dropped the proposal to legislate for work-directors as recommended by the Bullock report; it had shelved the devolution Bill for inter-party talks; it had dropped the Bill for direct labour employed by councils; it had surrendered the ship-repairing section of the Bill to nationalize the aircraft and shipbuilding industries.

By implication, therefore, Mr Callaghan was able to argue that any Liberal or UUU who jibed at socialism and socialism had already been given his answer. The Labour Government needed more time to fulfil its economic strategy. Would a general election that brought in Mrs Thatcher and her henchmen offer a safer prospect?

All in all, the Liberal and UUU groups now have to calculate their own self-interest including their electoral interest.

Mr Molyneux and his seven UUU colleagues who take the group which have to make up their minds whether they are likely to get a better deal from Mr Callaghan than from Mrs Thatcher, who represents a party that destroyed Somerset and Ulster self-government.

No group decisions are likely to be made conclusive until today, but there were signs at Westminster last night that Mr Callaghan had succeeded in sowing some doubts in Liberal and UUU minds.

It was notable, for instance, that when Mr Foot, leader of the House and Labour's principal party manager, had a preliminary meeting with Mr Molyneux yesterday morning, Mr Enoch Powell, who called at the two 1974 general elections for Labour support, was present. There is



Victorious veteran: Mr Morarji Desai, the 81-year-old Janata Party leader and possible successor to Mrs Gandhi as Prime Minister, reacts joyfully to news of his party's continuing election victories.

Indian opposition plans to take over power

From Richard Wigg
Delhi, March 21

With Mrs Gandhi expected to step down as Prime Minister tomorrow, the Janata (People's) Party has announced measures to dismantle the repressive apparatus of the emergency "when we form the government." The Janata Party appeared set for a clear majority in the new Parliament.

Mr B. D. Jatti, the acting President, announced early today that the emergency imposed in June, 1975, had been revoked. While thousands of political detainees may have to wait until after the formation of a new Government, lawyers explained today that resort to habeas corpus and the six fundamental rights of citizens obtain once again in India.

After her resounding defeat, Mrs Gandhi was expected to be asked by the President to continue running the country's affairs in a caretaker basis for the next few days. Reports about how the Prime Minister, who has not been seen in public, has taken the defeat differ.

"All political detainees will be released and if any proceed before the courts they will be reviewed," she said in a large but with warrants outstanding will have them cancelled," Mr Surendra Mohan, one of the general secretaries of the Janata Party, pledged at a press conference tonight after a meeting of the party's national executive here.

The outgoing administration released some of the prominent party leaders after Mrs Gandhi's decision to hold an election, but the Opposition maintained that as many as 10,000 of their party workers stayed behind bars. The Government has refused journalists' requests for any figure, but some Opposition sources have estimated that there are around 30,000 detainees of all kinds.

With official results slow to come in, the strength of Janata is underestimated in key states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, former Congress strongholds.

But Congress was holding well in the southern states of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Mr V. C. Shukla, the former Minister of Information and Broadcasting, today became the fifth member of Mrs Gandhi's Cabinet to lose his seat. Like Mr H. R. Cokhale, the Minister of Law, he was closely associated with the emergency.

The Janata Party today made an appeal to the breakaway Congress for Democracy group led by Mr Jagjivan Ram, the former Minister of Agriculture, to take part in the election, fixed for Thursday, of a single parliamentary leader, who would be India's next Prime Minister.

Mr Ram won his Bihar seat although his party did not do as well as generally expected. He is a contender for the post of Prime Minister although Mr Morarji Desai, aged 81, the Janata leader and elder statesman of India, is expected to win the nomination.

The Janata spokesman indicated that, once in power, the party would introduce legislation both to annul the Prevention of Subversive Activities Act and another emergency law curbing the reporting of Parliamentary debates.

The Maintenance of Internal Security Law would be said to be "removed from the statute book for good", and the new Law Minister would review the evidence in the so-called Baroda dynamite case under which Mr George Fernandes, the Socialist leader, is held. Mr Fernandes, still in jail, won in his Bihar constituency over his Congress opponent.

The Janata Party, catching the prevailing popular mood of disgust with the excesses of the emergency era, is to insist on a "code of austerity" for its MPs and ministers, who will have to disclose their sources of income.

After what has already been called "India's second night of destiny" (the first was Independence night in 1947) people continued to display their pleasure by watching, despite today being a working day, the "scoreboard" at Connaught Circus, in the centre of Delhi.

Whether it was all a vote for democracy is debatable, but the Indian people's verdict was so obviously a vote against authoritarianism, symbolized by the election defeat of three members of what Blitz, the popu'r weekly, called "India's gang of four"—Mr Sanjay Gandhi; Mr Bansi Lal, the Defence Minister; Mr V. C. Shukla, the Minister of Information; and Mr Om Mehta, the effective power at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

It is not often these days that in the Third World a minister of defence is defeated at the ballot box.

Mr Brezhnev accuses US of interference

Moscow, March 21.—Mr Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet Party leader, today accused the United States of interfering in Soviet internal affairs and said disquieting signs of a new "cold war" were appearing in the world.

Mr Brezhnev delivered his speech to the 5,000 trade unionists only six days before Mr Cyrus Vance, the American Secretary of State, is due in Moscow for the first contacts between the two superpowers since the end of the Carter Administration and the Soviet leadership.

Reminding his audience of Mr Vance's impending arrival, he declared: "We will see what he brings." But he had detected no signs of any effort by the new United States Administration in its first two months to overcome the stagnation in American-Soviet relations.

The Soviet leader made no direct link between the American stand on human rights and the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT). But diplomatic observers said the implication of his remarks was that the attainment of an agreement to replace the 1972 Salt accord, between the two superpowers, might be difficult unless Washington toned down its campaign for civil liberties.

Mr Brezhnev, who is 70, spoke for almost two hours, devoting about five minutes of his speech to rejecting Western claims that the Soviet Union was interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union.

Without referring to Mr Carter directly, the Kremlin leader added: "We will not tolerate interference in our internal affairs from anyone under any pretext. A normal development of relations between the two powers is unthinkable."

Clearly responding to President Carter's outspoken backing for the human rights cause in Communist countries, Mr Brezhnev said there could be no normal development of relations between the two powers if the alleged American interference continued.

Pounding the rostrum as he spoke to delegates at the sixteenth congress of Soviet trade unions in the Kremlin, the party leader proclaimed that dissidents engaging in anti-state activities would continue to be dealt with under the law. The dissidents, he said, were "outcasts... seeking to undermine our socialist society", and it was a "holy duty to protect the Soviet people from such activities."

Some Western diplomats saw Mr Brezhnev's speech as the toughest he has made since the détente era began seven years ago.

He said a big obstacle to any improvement in relations was raised "by outright attempts by American official bodies to interfere in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union."

Without referring to Mr Carter directly, the Kremlin

Africa should liberate itself, Dr Castro says

From Nicholas Ashford
Dar es Salaam, March 21

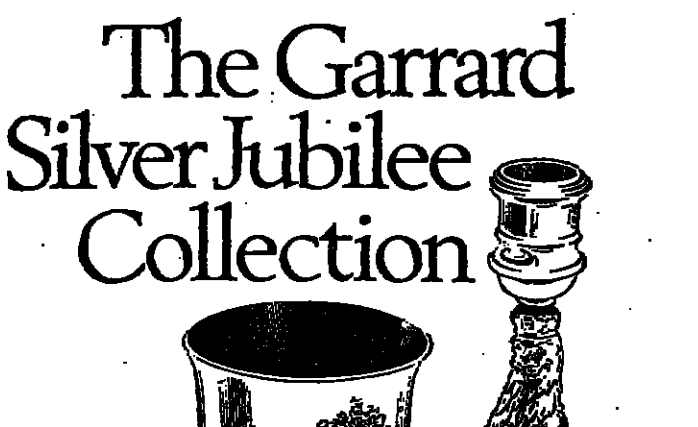
Dr Castro, the Cuban leader, today appeared to rule out the possibility of Cuban troops becoming involved in the guerrilla wars against Rhodesia and Namibia (South West Africa) when he declared that it was the duty of African countries to liberate themselves.

Speaking at a press conference at the end of a five-day state visit to Tanzania he said the task of liberating Africa was the responsibility of the people of those countries because independence is not enough. At present most of the military backing for the Rhodesian guerrilla armies is provided by the world, had a duty to support national liberation movements in southern Africa.

"We believe the struggle for independence is primarily a task which belongs to the people concerned of themselves. With the solidarity and support of all other progressive people, they are the ones who should realize the struggle for their independence."

Dr Castro emphasized the need for an African solution to all the problems of southern Africa. While Cuba was prepared to provide assistance, it was up to the African front line states to determine what sort of help that should be. At present most of the military backing for the Rhodesian guerrilla armies is provided by the world, had a duty to support national liberation movements in southern Africa.

Continued on page 11, col 1



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Government nervousness shows in hesitation over defence motion

A day when MPs' thoughts were elsewhere

By Hugh Noyes
Parliamentary Correspondent
Westminster

Yesterday was one of those occasions when the minds of MPs are on weightier matters than the business of the House. Indeed, what with all the feeling and duty going on behind the scenes in preparation for tomorrow's confidence motion, it was surprising that anyone turned up at all.

Mr Harold Walker, Minister of State for Employment, must have thought his colleagues new something that he did not and were already out on the usings. For most of his speech, opening the debate on the Redundancy Rebates Bill, there was not a single Liberal

MP on the benches behind the minister.

It was a bit ominous and Mr Barney Hayhoe, opening for the Tories, did his best to cheer up the minister over this lack of support by consoling him with the thought that Labour MPs were no doubt contemplating the miserable prospect of having to join the ever-lengthening dole queues outside before April was out.

On such occasions a nervous, giggling atmosphere develops in the Commons, with MPs on all sides not quite certain which way to jump. Mrs Thatcher turned up briefly but remained silent as Mr Foot, with forced light-heartedness, announced the revised business for the week.

Mr Callaghan wisely remained out of sight in his room as the pressures for compromise built up on all sides. Meanwhile MPs were making silly little jokes about the aftermath of Wednesday's vote. A sign of the disarray in ministerial circles was Mr Foot's coyness over the motion that the Government intends to table for the two-day defence debate, which begins today and ends next Monday with the vote of confidence in the Commons. There was much jollity on the Tory benches with MPs shouting "Remember Mrs Gandhi", which brought the inevitable reminder from the Labour side of the House, that woman leaders did not seem to be doing so well at the moment.

Mr Foot tried to pretend that there was nothing unusual in all that until a Tory reminded him that if there was not a motion relating to the debate on the defence White Paper the House would be able to talk about anything it liked. There he was soon evoked that the Government was in much the same difficulty as over the expenditure White Paper.

Mr Foot looked more and more woebegone as Tory MPs pressed him on the issue. All he would say was that before the division next Monday there would be a motion that would give the Conservatives plenty of time to make up their minds about how much they wanted to increase public expenditure.

Parliamentary report, page 8

Dockers in sit-in over closure

By Tim Jones
Labour Reporter

Angry dockers protesting against the threatened closure of Preston docks yesterday staged a "sit-in" at their union's headquarters in Transport House.

They were demanding a meeting with Mr Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, over a decision by the Conservative-controlled Preston council to close the docks, which last year lost £1.5m. Although fewer than two hundred men are employed on the quayside, dockers say closure would cost any jobs in related industries.

When they eventually met Mr Jones, after a five-hour occupation, he rejected their immediate demand for a national dock strike. "As they left the union's headquarters the dockers shouted: 'Either Jack Jones pulls his finger out or we'll get him out. We are demanding a national stoppage.' Ships were left idle at almost 0.000 men took part in a one-day unofficial stoppage.

Mr Jones dismissed as "non-sense" suggestions that the dockers had prevented him from leaving the board room.

Timely help for Big Ben from NEB

The National Enterprise Board is proposing to take a 90 per cent stake in Thwaites and Reed, a company of clockmakers, which in addition to supplying clocks for town halls, churches and famous buildings, is at the moment repairing Big Ben. The company goes back to 1740, when the Horse Guards Parade clock, which is still in use.

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Suspended sentence for Brendan Swords

Mr Brendan Swords, once described as the most wanted man in Britain, was given a suspended sentence in Dublin's Special Criminal Court. He had denied being a member of the Provisional IRA but he had pleaded guilty to giving the police a false name when questioned.

Page 2

Prison preferred

One of Pakistan's main Opposition leaders is refusing to leave jail in Lahore to discuss Mr Bhutto's offer of a dialogue on alleged ballot rigging until the Prime Minister lifts the state of emergency and frees all political prisoners.

Page 11

French President's strategy upset

The success of the Socialist-Communist alliance in the French municipal elections has dashed President Giscard d'Estaing's hopes of extending his power-base to the left. He appears to have no option but to adopt the policy of M. Jacques Chirac, the Gaullist leader—confirmation of the left in preparation for next year's parliamentary elections.

Page 9

Hospital security

A shortage of funds prevented the building of a £300,000 double security fence around one of the wings of the state hospital at Carstairs, Strathclyde, an inquiry at Lanark was told. The inquiry is into the escape last November that ended in three deaths Page 7

Asbestos will go

British Rail is to spend £7m in the next four years to remove blue asbestos lining material from the cabs of its locomotives. Guards' vans and drivers' compartments in multiple-unit trains will also be altered. Seven thousand older passenger coaches with asbestos concealed behind panels as an insulator are "far below danger levels". Page 7

Gap between pay and prices still widening

The gap between pay and prices continued to widen during January, with average earnings showing virtually no increase. Earnings have increased 5.5 per cent during the first six months of the present pay policy, with an increase of 0.1 per cent in January.

Page 21

Liberal manifesto

A renewal campaign for more democratic control over public services at present administered by central government agencies or non-elected bodies is urged in the Liberal Party's manifesto for the forthcoming metropolitan county council elections.

Page 6

Work scheme: The London probation service has found work for 100 probationers and former prisoners considered unemployed.

Human rights issue: Use of the birch in the Isle of Man is to be considered by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Page 7

South Africa: Mr Vorster discusses his much-criticized press Bill with a delegation of newspaper proprietors.

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Letters: On BBC reporting of Northern Ireland, on Sir Michael Swann's attitude on the timing of an election, from Mr J. E. Humphrey, and others.
Leading articles: Fall of the Nehru dynasty; Warning to President Giscard; Campaign for economic liberties.
Features, pages 16 and 18
Bernard Levin says: This gutless Government must go; Henry Stanhope on Mr Carter's hopes of a new arms deal with Russia; Shopping by Philippa Toomey.
Arts, page 13
Franco Zeffirelli talks to John Higgins about his film on Jesus; John Percival on Oscar Wilde's two Master Bachelors for Paris; Paul Overy on Bristol art exhibitions.
Obituary, page 19
Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith; Sir James Miller; Mr R. B. Charles.
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Bernard Kahn and Enoch Powell predict what will happen in the next ten years.
Sport, pages 14 and 15
Football: Norman Fox's FA Cup preview; Brazil through to South American finals of World Cup; Racing: Prospects for French flat racing season; Cricket: Craft to play for Lancashire.
Business News, pages 20-26
Stock markets: Political uncertainty left the FT index 14.1 lower at 414.4, the worst day for five weeks.
Financial Editor: Stock markets hate uncertainty; Inflation: accounting; CCA runs at Turner & Newall; Rolls-Royce Motors prospers.
Business features: Christopher Wilkins on how industry is avoiding guidance on company tax levels under inflation accounting; The synchronization of pay settlements is discussed by Eric Wigham.
Business Diary: Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon and the prospect of a general election.

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HOME NEWS

Urban deprivation not felt by big cities only, councils say

By Christopher Warman
Local Government Correspondent

The Government's views on how to tackle the difficulties of inner-city areas are unbalanced and unrealistic, the Association of District Councils says in a memorandum to Mr. Shore, Secretary of State for the Environment.

Responding to the government-sponsored "inner-area studies," and to Mr. Shore's recent pronouncements on the need for help for such areas, the association says the Government is in danger of overlooking the deprivation that exists in many urban and rural areas outside London and the big conurbations.

"To single out the inner urban areas of the main conurbations for further special treatment may well only distort overall priorities, and will not result in the best use of limited national resources," the memorandum adds.

The association, which has Bristol, Hull, Leicester, Nottingham and Southampton among its members, has carried out its own survey. It shows that such cities suffer from industrial decline, unemployment, poverty, and housing and social stress, difficulties such as we found in the central areas of the main conurbations.

It asks that before further aid for the metropolitan areas and London is considered there should be a "clear statement of the present spending priorities within those areas."

Students end sit-in

Essex University students decided yesterday to end their occupation in a protest against increased fees, after the proctor and registrar had travelled to London to seek a High Court repossession order.

by the implications of recent ministerial statements that the inner areas must get their "fair share" of resources, and that because of economic limitations any extra resources will have to come from public spending funds, the amount of which has been fixed.

The fear is that the extra resources that have been going to London and the metropolitan areas during the past few years are considered less than a "fair share" and that the future will see a transfer of funds from the non-metropolitan areas to the metropolitan areas.

The broad-brush approach of the past few years has been to push a greater proportion of grant into the metropolitan areas and to London without any assurance that the additional funds were being spent on the most needy parts of those areas," the memorandum says.

If the Government wanted to allocate extra resources for inner urban areas it should be done by specific grants for particular, small areas of special stress, whether in the main conurbations or not. The areas should be identified in accordance with agreed criteria.

The association also doubts the wisdom of abandoning the "well tested and successful strategy of planned dispersal" to new and expanding towns in favour of what it considers to be the less cost-effective policies of concentrating too much on providing new homes and industries in the inner urban areas.

Mr Sellers recovers

Mr Peter Sellers, who was in Charing Cross Hospital, London yesterday after collapsing on a flight from Nice, expects to go home on Thursday. His illness was thought to be poisoning after eating oysters.

Man in the news: Mr Robert Armstrong

Taking private secretary's art to new levels

By Peter Hennessy

Mr Robert Armstrong, who will succeed Sir Arthur Petersen as Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office on July 1, is in the classic mould of the nineteenth-century public servant produced by the great Civil Service reform of the 1870s.

Robert Lowe, the Liberal who did most to secure such reforms, would recognize him instantly as one of those disinterested, high-minded individuals, "true vowels," he called them, bred by the "freemasonry" of public school and ancient university.

Classical scholarship imparted at the Dragon School, Eton, and Christ Church, Oxford, is no longer a fashionable or universally admired progression. But few who have worked with him, whether ministers or fellow "vowels," have ever doubted that Robert Armstrong is good, very good, at his job.

The son of a former Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, he plumped for a public service career while at school in the last years of the Second World War. Sir John Maud (now Lord Redcliffe-Maud), a friend of his father's and one of the gifted irregulars seconded from the universities to Whitehall for the duration, used to hold musical evenings, which the young Robert attended at his home in Windsor.

It was Sir John's hand that guided him to a career that has encompassed the Treasury, the Cabinet Office and 10 Downing Street.

Mr Armstrong's breakthrough came in 1957 when, as a young principal, he was appointed secretary to the Radcliffe committee on the working of the monetary system. He returned to the home finance division of the Treasury to build up a corps of monetary statisticians.

His most notable contribution to public administration to date has been to take the

private secretary's art to new levels of refinement. It has been a guided sequence embracing Sir Wilfrid Eady, a Treasury second secretary, Mr. Reginald Maundling, as Economic Secretary, Mr. R. A. (now Lord Butler of Saferton Wallden) as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Roy Jenkins in the same post, crowned by a five-year spell at No 10 as principal private secretary to Mr. Heath and Sir Harold Wilson.

The top official post at the Home Office will be his first big test as a manager of men and institutions, as he readily admits. He is skilled at policy advice, and his abilities as a draftsman, a rapid dispatcher of business, and a confident to great men are not in doubt.

Successful permanent secretaries have tried to open up the Home Office, for historical reasons regarded as the grimmest of government departments, by reducing its isolation from the rest of Whitehall and helping to ease its traditional dilemma as the focus for two conflicting impulses in British life, the drive for reform and the desire for law and order. Mr Armstrong intends to take that process a step or two further.

Already at 49 a strong candidate for the Cabinet secretaryship when Sir John Hunt retires in two and a half years, Mr Armstrong's new post and the ones likely to come after it give him the chance to leave an enduring mark on British public life.

Mr Armstrong has little to learn about the stately manner that has to be danced in the refined reaches of Whitehall. His footsteps during the Falkland years at No 10, for example, can only be described in the words Churchill used of Arthur Balfour's transition from the Asquith to the Lloyd George Cabinet in 1916: He was "like a cat walking delicately across a rather muddy street."



Mr Robert Armstrong, who will face his first big test as a manager of men and institutions at the Home Office.

Intermediate stage in child-care gets boost

By Our Social Services Correspondent

Confirmation that "intermediate treatment" can help to rehabilitate delinquents and prevent children at risk from appearing before the courts is provided today in a report from the National Children's Bureau.

It is the first report to assess the relevance of intermediate treatment, which provides help for children at a stage between leaving them at home under social work supervision and taking them into residential homes.

The idea of using intermediate treatment instead of residential care has received a boost from the Government, in a circular urging transfer of resources to it and in a London regional conference held privately last weekend to discuss future developments.

Mr. Emsall, Secretary of State for Social Services, has endorsed the idea that it provides a better way of helping children in trouble than locking them away.

The bureau's report emphasizes that, while there are difficulties, the method has proved successful in seven intermediate treatment schemes sponsored by the Government and local authorities. The schemes were based in multiple-purpose units which lasted from 1970 to 1975, family advice centres and concentrated on encouraging young people to use the services provided rather than accepting references from other agencies.

In one area a father noticed that the queue of about 30 mothers waiting to take their children to court each week had dwindled to a few. A policeman said the work had led to a reduction of delinquency, and a boy aged 14 told the researchers: "I guess the people at the centre were trying to show the kids there was no need to get into trouble. I think they were successful in that they kept us off the streets and showed us that there were a lot of things to do."

All the schemes were based firmly in the communities they served and relied on cooperation with local people. There was respite in some areas that the schemes concentrated on delinquents and were permissive in character, but they were not diminished as local people became more involved.

Mr. Aryeh Leissner, a bureau researcher, said: "We tried to demonstrate that the best place to work with children is where they live, in their own community. The only way you will be successful in doing so is by getting the backing of that community."

The report recommends more central government financial support for intermediate treatment and that schemes should be run in close cooperation with the local area teams of social service departments.

Intermediate Treatment, by Aryeh Leissner, Terry Powley and Dave Evans (National Children's Bureau, 9 Wakeley Street, London EC1V 7QE, £1.80).

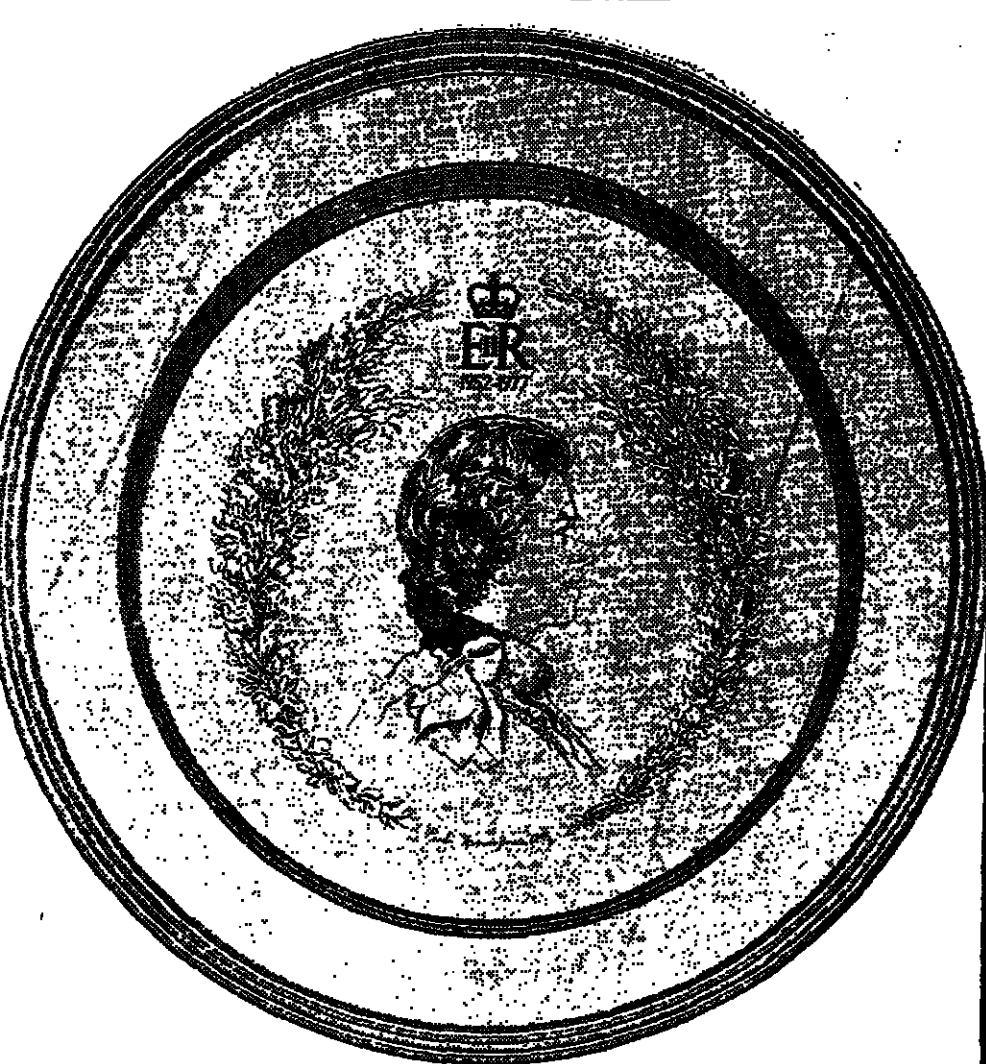
Mother and girl killed

A mother and her daughter aged eight were stabbed to death in their home in Dorset Gardens, Haringey, Greater London, yesterday. A man yesterday, who was taken to hospital.

Extra legs removed

A boy aged three months from Lincolnshire, who was born with four legs had two legs and a pelvic bone removed at Sheffield Children's Hospital yesterday. He was said to be doing well.

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ADDRESS

The Education debate: Administrators are sceptical 'Smokescreen' of one-day events

By Tim Devlin
Education Correspondent

The Welsh are not short of voice and no doubt there will be plenty of steam let off at today's one-day conference for Welsh educationists, employers and parents in Cardiff. But will the debate, centred as it is on the core curriculum, test, training and relations with industry, throw much light on the principal's particular difficulties?

It is clear that many of the senior administrators of South Glamorgan Education Authority, the hosts of today's conference, are just a touch cynical about the whole exercise. For example, Mr. Fred Adams, director of education, says: "The great debate, with its emphasis on academic standards and training engineers, is miles above the heads of a sizeable number whose aspirations are bound to be limited."

The main difficulty in his district of 75,000 schoolchildren, covering Cardiff, Barry and Penarth, is the "alienated pupil". He explains: "The truancy rate in Wales is higher than in England, and we seem to be top of the league in Wales."

Last month's attendance figure of nearly 89 per cent is a good deal better than last February, 1976, when it was 84.5 per cent. But Mr. Adams sees little cause for complacency.

Secondary schools in some areas are down to an average of 80 per cent, says Mr. Adams. He says, but it may be one-fifth of the pupils away one day and a completely different fifth away the next. "This is not merely a question of social deprivation: it is a question of finding some reality, some education for them. This has so far baffled us."

For Dr. Trevor Jones, who is in charge of 18 advisers, the great debate appears to be a big smokescreen. "What is the point of holding a one-day conference? The Government is just trying to show that it is concerned," he says. "It does not take into account the good practice that has always occurred in good schools all the time."

"We do not want a common system like other countries. The British system can be proud of its freedom of education. It is unique and one of the best systems in the world. Anything else will not give progress. It will result in fragmentation."

Mr. Ronald Garrod, assistant director for schools, would not go as far as calling the debate a "smokescreen," but he is apprehensive. He is afraid that amateurs rather than professionals may get control of teacher appointments as a result. "We feel," he said, "that we are either tackling or have succeeded as well as we can in most elements that the debate has to cover."

Certainly South Glamorgan is beginning to develop close links between schools and industry. Teachers are being seconded to companies for short periods, and some companies have adopted schools. As a result of the Education (Works Experience) Act, 1973, about 140 pupils aged 15 have been engaged on Post Office courses. The latest proposal is for a primary school with more enclosed units for formal teaching and secondary schools with more workshops and domestic science rooms, because the great debate is making them the fashion. But he wonders, those who teach English should be able to express their views more shortly than this," he said.

Mr. Adams contended that the association's evidence was concisely written. "I will not comment on the remark about 'jargon'," he said, "but I should have thought it was perfectly understandable to those who take an intelligent interest in education."

The hearing started with an argument between the chairman, Miss Jane Eokes, M.P., and Mr. Adams over the language in which the evidence was presented. Miss Eokes told him his report was "jargon-packed" with jargon. "Surely those who teach English should be able to express their views more shortly than this," she said.

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Cut in foreign TV material sought by unions

By Our Arts Reporter

Seven of the eight unions representing broadcasting workers, performers and writers are seeking immediate meetings with the directors-general of the BBC and the Independent Broadcasting Authority to protest about increasing use of foreign material and cinema films on television.

They want a marked reduction in the use of such material. A statement by the Federation of Broadcasting Unions said yesterday that they also wished to discuss the use of "hybrid" products, made for use in broadcasting and the cinema.

The statement said: "The unions argue that the existing use of material of this kind prejudices the ability of the national broadcasting organizations fully to reflect the national culture and impairs the contribution that British artists, writers and broadcasters can make to that culture."

They had pledged joint action to secure their objectives. The seven hope to be joined by the eighth, the National Association of Television and Kine Employees, after the union's executive has met at the end of this month.

Fund for orphans

An appeal was opened yesterday by Oxford United Football Club and the Oxford Mail for six children who were orphaned by the car crash in which Peter Housman, the footballer, his wife and two friends died on Sunday.

Spelling 'a trivial matter', teacher claims

By Owen Surridge

A representative of teachers of English yesterday told the House of Commons subcommittee looking into educational attainment in the schools that he thought spelling was a trivial matter. "It is not strictness or lack of strictness that matters so much as consistency in the teaching," he said. He was speaking in evidence given by the National Association for the Teaching of English.

Challenged to justify the remark, Mr. Anthony Adams, secretary of the association, said: "Spelling mistakes are of different kinds. Some stem from lack of care, others from

ignorance or psychological aberration."

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Thomson sells its interest in Slough newspaper

Agreement has been reached for Westminster Press to acquire for a nominal consideration the Thomson Organisation interest in the Evening Mail, Slough, which immediately becomes a wholly owned subsidiary of Westminster Press. Hitherto each company held half the shares.

Mr. Julian Marshall, chief executive of the Evening Mail, is resigning to take another post with the Thomson Organisation. He will be succeeded by Mr. David Spencer-Crow, who becomes director and general manager of Evening Mail. Mr. Spencer-Crow has been secretary and chief accountant of the company since it was incorporated in 1969.

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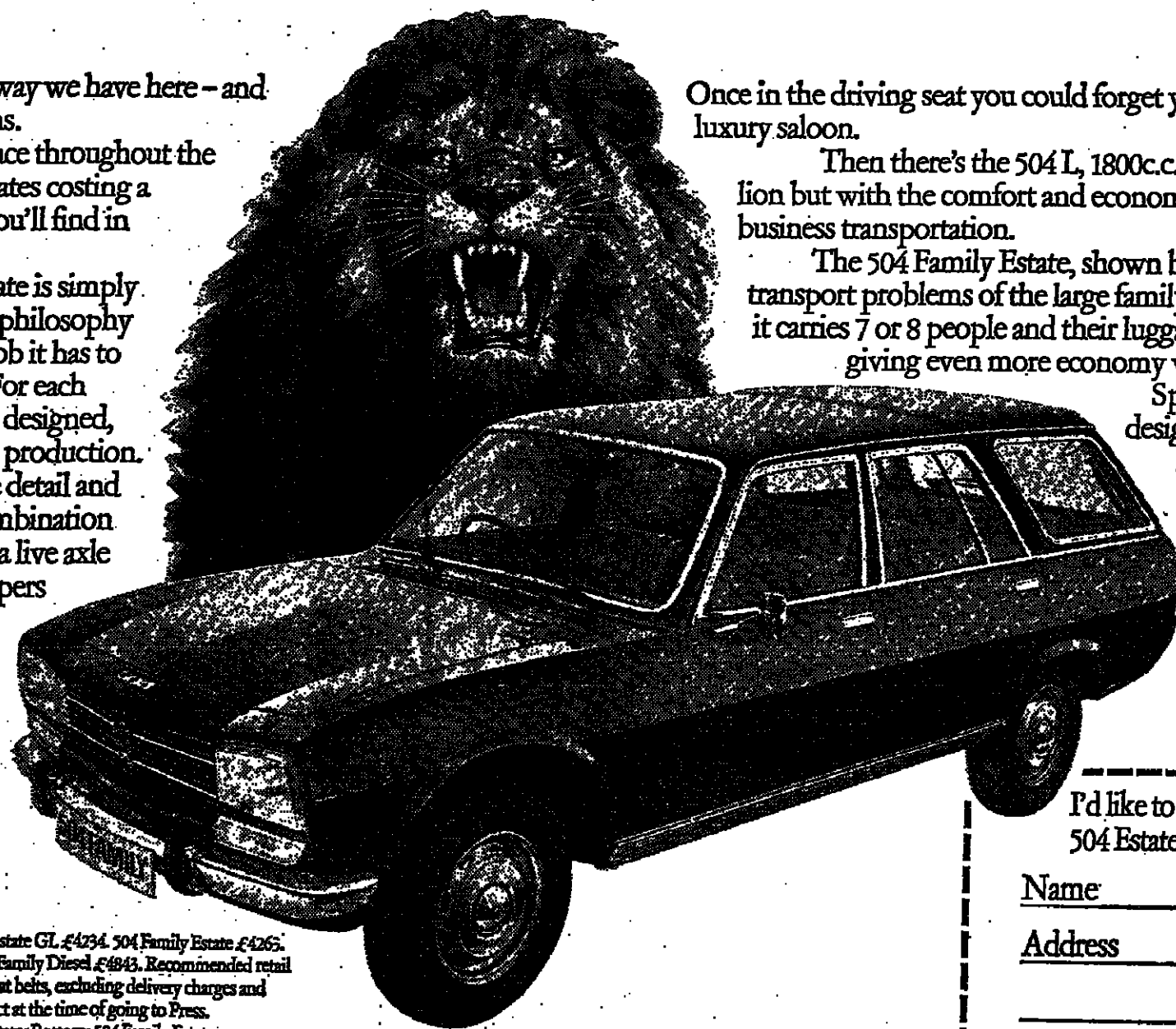
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HOME NEWS

Liberals seek more democratic control over local services

By John Chartres

The Liberal Party's manifesto for the forthcoming metropolitan county council elections calls for a renewed campaign for democratic control over such matters as economic planning, health services, water supplies, gas and electricity, all at present administered by central government agencies or non-elected bodies.

The manifesto says the reorganization of local government three years ago has proved an "effective disaster and a complete failure" and that the Liberal proposals for regional assemblies have been proved right.

"The metropolitan county councils are too remote to carry out certain community services and yet they are too small to deal with matters that require regional resources and power," it says.

The manifesto also draws attention to excessive "shunting" of plans between county and district councils. "Planning should be more precise. Councils should be encouraged to designate land for specific purposes." It alleges that in too many metropolitan counties administration is "flabby" and that there is little true financial accountability.

The manifesto was released simultaneously yesterday in the six metropolitan counties

outside London, which were created during the local government reorganization and where the first elections since their formation by a "shadow poll" in 1973 will take place on May 5.

In Greater Manchester, councillor Gordon Bayley, leader of the 12 Liberals on the council of 106 members, said that Liberal policies had saved and could continue to save tens of thousands of pounds of ratepayers' money. There was a complete absence of an effective financial reporting system on Greater Manchester Council.

The Liberal group's financial spokesman, Councillor Robert Tilley, said: "Local government administration is unbelievably inefficient. It cannot make decisions quickly enough and it cannot apply resources in the right places."

Mr Bayley said that unless he had satisfactory explanations and promises of action on certain matters he was hesitating in calling in the district auditor. That is a simple ratemakers' prerogative and I shall use it if necessary."

The Liberals hope to field more than 50 candidates and Mr Bayley thought they should increase their holding on the council to at least 15.

Keep second class mail at 6½p, PO told

By Malcolm Brown

The Mail Users' Association, which represents the Post Office's largest commercial customers, yesterday urged the corporation not to put up the price of second-class mail.

In a memorandum sent to the Post Office and the Post Office Users' National Council, the association recommends that the proposed increase in first-class rates should be agreed to only on condition that the corporation can show that it has met several conditions, including its own targets for quality of service, for four consecutive weeks.

The Post Office is proposing that the basic first-class letter rate should be increased by 1p to 9p and that second-class letters should go up by 1p to 7p. At the same time the basic weight step would be cut from 60g to 50g.

The MUA emphasizes that it is not endorsing the rise in first-class rates without strings. "If posts could show that it intends to give value for money for the first-class service it would stand a very good chance of maintaining the existing first/second-class split," it says.

"The theoretical best achievement for first class is in the order of 96 per cent delivery by the day following posting. Once this objective has been regularly achieved the business should then be asked to explore ways of raising the objective. This condition could be imposed on all future tariff references."

There should be a discount for bulk first-class postings, the association adds.

Arguing that the second-class tariff should be held at its present level, the MUA says widening the differential between first and second-class would benefit not only the business and bulk user but also the general user, particularly the poor.



Wives protesting in London yesterday in support of the police pay claim

Dividing Treasury 'would bring chaos'

By a Staff Reporter

Lord Diamond, Chief Secretary to the Treasury from 1964 to 1970, said yesterday that any attempt to split the Treasury would lead to chaos and incoherence.

Rather than losing its responsibility for public spending to a separate department of Budget and manpower, as suggested by Mr Heath and Sir Harold Wilson, the Treasury should take responsibility for Civil Service manpower from the Civil Service Department. He told the Commons Select Committee on Expenditure that such a move would enable the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to carry out properly his function of controlling spending. At present the Chief Secretary was answerable to Parliament for manpower estimates but was not responsible for manpower as a minister.

"I accept the argument that the control of expenditure and the control of the manpower it represents should go together," Lord Diamond said. "The

Treasury could cope so readily with such a transfer and still manage to be a smaller department than the Civil Service Department."

To remove control over spending from the Treasury would deprive the Chancellor of an important tool of economic management. Supervision of public spending accounted for about a quarter of the Treasury's activity.

Lord Diamond was supported in his opposition to the dismemberment of the Treasury by Sir Samuel Goldman, a former Second Permanent Secretary at the Treasury responsible for public spending. He said splitting the Treasury would be dangerous, much as the operation needed to separate Stamesse twins was dangerous.

But Sir Samuel had doubts about the Treasury's taking back the manpower functions it lost in 1968. There was insufficient appreciation of the costs involved in chopping and changing government departments, he said.

More room at last for Wales's overflowing library

Regional report

Trevor Fishlock
Cardiff

The National Library of Wales, storehouse of treasures and one of the great buildings of the Principality, has run out of space. It overflows with books and documents, and emergency shelving fills every corridor, catwalk and corner.

Administrators regard the position as desperate.

Now, however, the Government is expected to announce soon that it is authorizing the spending of £1.5m on expansion of the building.

The extension will be in keeping with the library's magisterial Edwardian style and will be started in a year's time, opening in 1980. It will enable the library to continue to fulfil the role its founders envisaged during the nineteenth-century movement to create national institutions for Wales.

Although that movement was strongest in Victorian times and led to the founding of the University of Wales, the

National Museum and the National Biscuit, the seed of the library was planted in London during the eighteenth century.

A group of Welsh literati who wanted to excite interest in Welsh literature started a collection of books and papers at the Welsh School, in Gray's Inn Road, in 1753. During the 1840s the dream of founding a national library in Wales faded and the books and manuscripts kept at the school were lodged in the British Museum.

Thirty years later a library campaign began in Wales and more than 30 years after that the Government at last agreed to pay for a library at Aberystwyth. It started humbly in 1909 and moved to its splendid granite and Portland stone edifice, on a hillside commanding the sweep of Cardigan Bay, in 1916.

The library has what is claimed to be the finest collection of Welsh books and manuscripts anywhere. The heart of

securing the life and literature of the Welsh language.

The library has more than 2.5 million books and its collection has been swelled by the arrival of more than 30,000 books every year.

As one of the six copyright libraries under the Act of 1911 (the others are the British Library, the Bodleian, the Bodleian, Trinity College, Dublin, the Bodleian, Oxford, and University Library, Cambridge) the Welsh library receives copies of all books, government publications and many newspapers and periodicals published in Britain.

Mr David Jenkins, the librarian, said: "With the library overflowing, the need for more room is urgent, if not desperate. The extension should have been started four years ago but was delayed because of cost. We are so hard-pressed now that something had to be done and we are most relieved that the important single influence in

There are 19 of the 22 Welsh books printed before 1600, the first book printed in Welsh, and copies of the 1588 Welsh Bible, the book that was the most important single influence in

Woman attacks barristers' 'old boy network'

The Bar conducts its internal affairs on the basis of "an old boy network" which recognizes no duty to provide equal opportunities, a barrister said yesterday.

Miss Mary Colton, a member of the Bar since 1955, says in evidence she has submitted to the Royal Commission on Legal Services that in its dealings with clients and the courts the Bar's standards are very high. But in the management of its internal relationships "there are no standards at all".

"The system places a premium on the manipulation of contacts, and leaves some groups, particularly women, at a permanent disadvantage," she says.

"It must be of public concern that entry is in effect restricted, competition is distorted, and a proper career structure is often denied, affecting recruitment

Yard man questioned

A senior Scotland Yard officer denied at the Central Criminal Court yesterday that he or his men had leaked information to the press immediately before the arrest of detectives accused in the pornography bribery trial.

Assistant Commissioner Gilbert Kelland agreed that there had been a leak to the press but said it had not come from him or his officers. There had not been a deliberate attempt to gain maximum publicity for the arrests.

Mr Kelland, questioned by Mr Robin Simpson, for the defence of Det Chief Supt Alfred Moody, agreed that

when Mr Moody and others were arrested at their homes at 7.30 am on February 28 last year a large number of reporters and photographers were waiting outside the house.

Asked how that came about, Mr Kelland replied: "Press sources are unknown to me. The information did not come from my office or from my officers."

Mr Kelland was asked about an alleged attempt to keep former Commander Wallace Virgo out of the prosecution because he was "close to Sir Robert Mark". He said the allegation was completely untrue.

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Plans to cut teacher-training places in Scotland meet wide condemnation

From Martin Huckerby

Edinburgh

Plans to close more than forty colleges of education in England and Wales have caused widespread protests, but that is nothing to the furor that has developed over similar cuts in Scotland, where two colleges are threatened with closure and two with mergers.

Almost every educational organization in Scotland seems to have expressed opposition to the plan, along with the local authorities, churches and the recent Labour Party Scottish conference at Perth.

Yet Scotland will remain far better endowed with teacher-training places than England and Wales; by 1981 there should be about 45,000 students in teacher-training establishments in England and Wales (about one for every 1,100 members of the population), while in Scotland there should be 6,170 students (about one student for every 850 members of the population).

Nevertheless, opponents of the closures in Scotland claim that about 300,000 people have signed petitions against the cuts, perhaps the biggest mass petition since the "Save the Argylls" campaign in the 1960s.

Many Scottish Labour MPs have been active in the campaign (as well as many members of other parties) and

the depth of feeling has been shown by Mr Harry Ewing, who despite being an Under-Secretary of State in the Scottish Office, has been vigorously opposing the Scottish Office proposal to close Callendar Park College, which is in his constituency of Strirling, Falkirk and Grangemouth.

Under the plan perhaps 400 lecturers would lose their jobs and two colleges, Callendar Park, at Falkirk, and Craigie, at Ayr, would close. Craigie, a small Roman Catholic college in Edinburgh, would be merged, probably with Dundee College, and Dunfermline College of Physical Education, which despite its name is based in Edinburgh, would also merge with Dundee. All but Craigie would be housed in modern, purpose-built premises.

Apart from the cost of duplicating specialist polytechnic education facilities at Dundee, the Government has reason for wanting to transfer more teacher training to the city, where the large college of education is nowhere near full at present. Moreover, Dundee desperately needs extra employment, which the mergers could bring, although staff living and working in Edinburgh would be understandably reluctant to leave such an attractive centre.

Many organizations have been highly critical of the Government's failure to provide any estimate of how much

money could be saved by the cuts, and also of the lack of alternatives in what was supposed to be a consultative document from the Scottish Office.

Some opponents of the plan accept that there must be a reduction in the number of student teachers, but say the existing colleges should be retained, with smaller numbers of students. Other bodies have called for the spare teachers to be used to reduce class sizes in Scotland.

The Scottish Office has been strenuously resisting the attacks, pointing out that the teacher-pupil ratios in Scottish schools are already a good deal better than in Britain as a whole.

However, the Government has failed to satisfy the protesters, many of whom see the closures as an attack on the whole Scottish education system and as yet another example of a government in Westminster taking something away from the Scots.

There have also been angry comments about the speed with which the exercise of consultation has been taking place; the document was published in mid-January and Mr Milne, the Secretary of State for Scotland, is expected to announce his final decision next month.

Despite all the pressure, it looks increasingly likely that the Government will confirm the consultative document and go ahead with the closures.

SNP dispute over anti-English attitude

From a Staff Reporter

Edinburgh

The dispute among Scottish nationalists about whether their party should be anti-English as well as for an independent Scotland continues with a new attack against "chip-on-the-shoulder provincialism" by Professor Neil MacCormick, a leading moderate in the Scottish National Party.

He was writing ostensibly about universities in the magazine Q, seeking to rebut arguments concerning the growing proportion of English-trained professors in Scottish universities, but his article was in effect an attack on the anti-English attitudes of some more extreme elements in the SNP.

Professor MacCormick, who

is prospective SNP candidate for Edinburgh, North, said: "What Scottish nationalism in its true and honourable form is not concerned with is a carrying and nasty attitude to English people or any 'outsiders' who have settled here and committed themselves to working and bringing up their families here."

He was responding to an article by Dr John Hulbert, SNP candidate for Aberdeenshire, West, who thought it was not surprising that the academic staffs in Scottish universities opposed devolution.

Professor MacCormick wrote: "The day people get jobs in competitive circumstances because they are Scots rather

than because they merit an appointment is the day on which we devalue the currency."

He referred to the many gifted academics from England and elsewhere who worked in Scottish universities and said that some of them had been "deeply wounded by some recent mud-slinging in the public prints. It is against the fundamental decency of the SNP

Dr Hulbert has replied that his figures demonstrated the intellectual colonization of Scotland. When Scotland was independent "our universities will discover once again that they are Scottish, not British, and the situation will change of its own accord."

Surveyors want time saved at road inquiries

By Our Planning Reporter

Tighter rules to prevent waste of time and money at public inquiries into road schemes are suggested by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

In evidence to the Department of the Environment and the Council on Tribunals, which are together considering the reform of inquiry procedures, the institution supports the view that Parliament should be given the opportunity to debate broad questions of transport policy.

There should be a maximum of 12 months between the close of public consultation on alternative routes and the publication of a draft line order. Proponents of an important road scheme and objectors should be required to exchange expert evidence before the inquiry begins.

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OME NEWS

To money for double security fence at hospital, inquiry told

An inquiry into an escape from Scotland's state hospital at Strathclyde, which led in three deaths, was told yesterday that lack of money prevented the building of a £300,000 double security fence around one of the hospital wings.

Mr Archibald Rennie, a Scottish Office official, told the inquiry, which opened in Strathclyde yesterday, that a fence had been built around the east wing of the hospital but not the west wing, where the escape took place last September. "The question of funds for the present fence is the present obstacle," he said.

The inquiry, which is expected to last at least three weeks, was ordered by Mr Millicent Foot, Secretary of State for Scotland, after an escape from the hospital in November 1976. The escapee, a man named James McCulloch, aged 26, had been in the hospital for several years. He was a patient of a male nurse, a patient, and a local policeman.

The two men have since been sentenced to life imprisonment, with a recommendation that they should remain in the hospital for the rest of their natural lives.

Mr Rennie, an under-secretary at the Scottish Home and Health Department, told Mr Foot that the hospital had been built in 1971, and that the original idea was to have an inner perimeter fence on both wings. When it came to building the fence, there had been such an increase in prices that the cost of the east wing fence was as much as had originally been estimated for the two fences.

The hearing continues today.

ToM birching goes to human rights tribunal

The allegation that the Isle of Man's birching laws contravene the European Convention on Human Rights is to be tried before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The Council of Europe has announced that the chamber of seven judges is being assembled to consider the matter.

Attempts by the British Government to seek an "amicable solution" with the Manx authorities to avoid formal charges being laid before the European court have therefore failed. The European commission decided in October 1975, that birching contravened the convention.

Mr Jack Corrin, the Manx Attorney-General, said yesterday that he was aware the matter had been referred to the European court. The report of the European commission on the case was still confidential, but its contents would be made public as soon as the restriction was lifted.

The case before the commission was against the British Government as signatory of the convention on behalf of the Manx Government. But Tynwald, the Manx Parliament, has consistently defied what it regards as attempts by both Strathclyde and Whitehall to force the repeal of birching.

In renewing the right of Manx people to petition the commission last year, Manx MPs asked for an exception to be made in cases relating to "judicial corporal punishment".

Budget preview 2: The anomalies of inflation

Chancellor likely to raise indirect taxes

By Neville Hodgkinson
Social Policy Correspondent

The Chancellor is determined to cut income tax in his forthcoming Budget, but he is also highly likely to raise taxes on spending. Excise duties on items such as petrol, drink and tobacco may go up, and value-added tax will almost certainly be increased.

Successive chancellors have found it relatively easy, until now, to tax incomes more and more heavily simply by failing to adjust for inflation. They have taken advantage of the public's failure to grasp the significance of the process known to economists as inflationary fiscal drag.

But flat-rate taxes on expenditure are depreciated by inflation, and indirect taxation has fallen over the past few years as a proportion of the total tax burden.

Any big increase in the main excise duties to catch up with inflation is hazardous politically because of its sudden effect on prices. The dangers are particularly acute for a government seeking to defend a shaky policy of voluntary pay restraint.

An increase in VAT would also raise prices, but for a Labour Chancellor it has the advantage of being less of a burden on the lower paid. VAT covers less than half the goods consumed by the average person, and zero-rated goods form a big proportion of the spending in poorer families.

Since Mr Healey accepts that the income tax burden has become too great, why should he not be seeking to cut all forms of personal taxation?

One answer is that when considering tax cuts he has to bear in mind the need to limit both the level of public debt and the extent of public spending cuts. To return to the rates of tax and the real value of allowances that were in force in 1973-74 would mean giving up £5,000m.

Another answer is that the more Mr Healey can raise indirect taxes, the more he can do to relieve incomes of the tax distortions and anomalies wrought on them by inflation.

A third answer is that Britain is not as highly taxed overall, relative to other Western industrial countries, as is usually thought, although that is partly because we have run up debts instead of paying for what we have spent.

Total taxation, including social security contributions, rose from just under a third of the national product in the early 1960s to 42.5 per cent in 1970. But it fell between 1970 and 1973 and was still barely two fifths in 1975, about the same as in France and Canada. The proportion was considerably more—about half—in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands, although much less in the United States and Japan. The British are relatively

Income tax on each of the following income groups in 1974-75		Income Tax (£ million)	
Total net income	Income Tax	Gross income	Income Tax
Under £1,000	2,500
£1,000-£2,000	15,000
£2,000-£3,000	27,500
£3,000-£4,000	27,500
£4,000-£5,000	10,000
£5,000-£6,000	15,000
£6,000-£7,000	20,000
£7,000-£8,000	20,000
Over £8,000	20,000

Source: Treasury

high-taxed in the proportion of total personal income that is paid in social security contributions. The figure in 1974 was only 6.9 per cent, compared with 12 per cent in Belgium and 13.2 per cent in West Germany, for example, although direct comparisons may be misleading without adjustments for differences in the systems.

The most striking, and many would say damaging, differences between Britain and her main industrial competitors are in the size of the income tax component of total revenue (more than half in Britain) and in the high marginal rates charged to the relatively poor, the prosperous, and the wealthy.

A married man with two children under 11 starts paying tax at 35 per cent on every pound he earns over £1,685 a year (£32 a week) in the United Kingdom, assuming he has only the standard personal allowances. That is a lower threshold than in all other Western industrial countries except Sweden and Italy, where the initial rates are only 4 per cent and 10 per cent respectively.

NET INCOMES AFTER TAX AND SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS (married man with two children)					
	US	France	Germany	Japan	5 sterling Britain
Gross income	2,500	2,300	2,080	2,425	2,100
Income tax	15,000	4,500	4,550	4,750	3,550
Social security	27,500	8,300	6,700	8,450	8,144
Net income	27,500	8,300	6,700	8,450	8,144
Income tax	15,000	12,600	10,390	13,200	8,145
Social security	20,000	15,130	13,210	15,940	9,480
Net income	20,000	23,030	18,410	23,500	11,314

Source: Treasury

Train cabs to be rid of asbestos

British Rail is to spend £7m in the next four years to remove potentially dangerous blue asbestos lining material from the cabs of locomotives. Guards' vans and the drivers' compartments in multiple-unit trains are also being "decontaminated".

Medical opinion is that blue asbestos, even in small concentrations, can cause lung cancer.

British Rail said yesterday that seven thousand passenger coaches had asbestos as a thermal and acoustic insulant, concealed behind panels. They were built before 1957, when British Rail stopped using the material. Two years later government regulations banning its use came into force.

"Constant tests have proved that the levels are far below any danger levels," British Rail said. "Our regulations regarding asbestos dust levels are four times more stringent than those required by law."

Seventeen special "asbestos houses" are already in use on the rail network, and three more are being built at a cost of £200,000 each. The asbestos lining will be removed from all locomotives as they have main overhauls, and all will be treated within four years.

Within two years the driving cabs of multiple units will have had the asbestos removed or sealed with a spray-on coating. Where the spray-coating is used there will be a systematic re-inspection programme.

£2m lost in collapse of newspaper

Shareholders and creditors are lost a total of £2m in the collapse of the Scottish Daily News, the paper launched two years ago by a workers' co-operative.

At a creditors' meeting in Glasgow yesterday, Mr James Whitton, the liquidator, announced that total receipts from the liquidation would be £1,379,000. That included £875,000 from the sale of the buildings and plant, and £109,000 from the auction of equipment.

The building and main printing presses were sold to George Outram and Co, which publishes the Glasgow Herald and the Evening Times.

Mr Whitton said he had completed the realization of assets of the company, Scottish News Enterprises Ltd. They were insufficient to pay the creditors secured by floating charges. Consequently nothing was available for ordinary creditors and shareholders.

After the meeting, which lasted only 10 minutes and was attended by about thirty creditors, Mr Whitton said ordinary creditors' claims totalled £852,000. In addition, shareholders would lose £630,749. "Preferred creditors would be paid in full. They included employees' claims for holiday pay. The balance of the money realized from the liquidation could go to partially secured creditors, the Department of Industry (owed £1,200,000) and Beaverbrook Newspapers (£225,000), but they would not be paid in full."

Head teacher says children not cared for

Allegations that children at Normansfield Hospital, Teddington, London, were inadequately cared for and that the nursing staff were "overpowering", were made yesterday when an inquiry into conditions at the hospital opened in London.

The inquiry, which was called by the Secretary of State for Social Services, is to investigate the events that led to a strike on May 5 last, when Dr Terence Lawlor, the consultant psychiatrist and only doctor at the hospital, was suspended by the regional health authority.

Mr Philip Otton, QC, counsel for the inquiry, read a petition signed by the nurses before the strike. It objected to Dr Lawlor's behaviour, including his "attitude, harassment, interference in nursing duties and objections to nurses' union membership".

Mrs Joan Halliday, temporary head teacher of the hospital school, told the inquiry that the children in the hospital were smelly, without very good clothes and did not seem to be bathed as regularly as incontinent children should be.

Mrs Halliday said that on the day after the strike a nursing officer had told her that she was "black" because a member of her staff had cleaned a ward during the strike. The nursing officer and two female nurses had boxed her in in her office and tended to be overpowering," she said.

The inquiry continues today.

£70,000 burglar learnt his craft in prison

George Alexander, a former marauder, used his military training and a personalized address book to select his burglary victims, who included royalty, it was alleged at St Albans Crown Court, Hertfordshire, yesterday.

Mr Alexander, aged 31, of 27a's Hall, Pinner, Middlesex, was said to have been recruited as an apprentice burglar in jail and the training he was given allowed him to escape with more than £70,000 of jewelry and antiques, including the Whitebread Gold Cup and the Royal Hunt Cup.

Mr Alexander, already serving a five-year sentence for other burglaries, pleaded guilty to a total of 23 burglaries between 1971 and 1972. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment to run consecutively with that one.

Mr Michael Hill, for the prosecution, said that in a 60-page statement Mr Alexander,

Production back to normal at nuclear station

Electricity production is back to normal at the Calder Hall plant of British Nuclear Fuels, in Cumbria. After a six-week strike, which also affected the Windscale plant, which ended a week ago, all three reactors are now providing power for the national grid and earning £14,000 a day.

Mr Roy Pilling, aged 51, took over as general manager yesterday from Mr Peter Mummery, aged 50, who has been appointed the company's director of health and safety.

Northumberland County Council is to oppose plans to dump nuclear waste under the Cheviot Hills.

After receiving protests from members of the public, the county's environmental committee decided yesterday to tell scientists from the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell that they were against any proposals to site dumps in granite under Cheviot or the neighbouring Hedgeshope Hills.

Electronic links in ambulance service merger

An electronic ambulance control centre linking 194 vehicles and 24 stations with seventy hospitals was opened in Liverpool by the Merseyside Regional Health Authority yesterday.

The centre, in Lower Breck Road, Liverpool, replaces eight separate controls. Mr Albert Guinness, chief metropolitan ambulance officer, said it was an important step forward in merging the ambulance crews of eight local authorities into a unified service.

It will direct the work of more than 550 operational staff serving a population of 1,700,000 people in an area of 263 sq miles.

Last year the ambulances carried more than half a million patients, a fifth of them emergency cases.

Cumbria guide

The Cumbria Tourist Board has produced a brochure, *Road to the Border*, to help tourists travelling north on the M6 to discover more of the Lake District on the way.

Rush & Tompkins Homes Ltd. are building another 550 homes with electric ceiling heating. For all the right reasons.

"We're quite happy with the running cost, thanks to the good insulation" Mr. & Mrs. A. J. Coley



"The most comfortable type of heating we've ever had" Mr. & Mrs. G. Rix



"Clean, easy to control... the finest heating system I've encountered" Mr. J. M. Penton



"Low capital cost, easy installation, satisfied customers" Mr. A. P. R. Watson, M.I.O.B., Managing Director, Rush & Tompkins Homes Ltd., Sidcup, Kent



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BUILDELECTRIC

The Electricity Council, England and Wales



and politically highly contro-
versial.

gave approval to borrowing powers when the project concerned was about to undergo a public inquiry as to its safety and other factors. Frank Woolley (Sheffield, Heeley, Lab) said they were told that the present state of the economy meant they must guard and watch over every pound of public expenditure proposed. Yet in this situation there was a Bill which was cheaply proposing a commitment of £100,000 of the taxpayer's money in an area that was technologically and politically highly controversial.

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WEST EUROPE

Herr Schmidt to head Bundestag appraisal of bugging controversy

From Dan van der Var
Bonn, March 21
Herr Schmidt, the West German Chancellor, will take the lead at a special meeting of all parliamentary leaders tomorrow to discuss the bugging controversy.

A Government spokesman announcing this today, the circulation weekly *Quick* Munich disclosed details of a eavesdropping operation in a Bavarian prison, which same spokesman later conceded was a failure.

The *Quick* disclosure counts the tapping of a telephone by an imprisoned terrorist for a conversation with a man associate in another jail yesterday.

The Government spokesman said this operation fell within responsibility of the Bavarian, not the federal, Government, although Bonn has been blamed and approved the operation because of a terrorist emergency at the time.

Although the bugging scandal is now hanging fire, with mixed or threatened further relations still to come; Herr Schmidt's Government remains ash in a rising sea of troubles with no rescue in sight.

The weekend provided nothing but bad news for Herr Schmidt and his colleagues. The ruling Social Democrats suffered losses amounting to a hemorrhage in yesterday's municipal elections in the state of Hesse.

They lost power in five of the state's six largest cities, including Frankfurt, which had been in SPD hands since the end of the Second World War. The high losses reflect local discontent with the complacent SPD hierarchy, which has lost in a series of local elections that forced the resignation of Prime Minister last week. A municipal boundary dispute also angered the voters. But the council elections are the sole important test of

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ers need

Some form of self-government wanted before elections

Catalonians united in quest for autonomy

From William Chislett
Barcelona, March 21
While nationally the Spanish political map becomes more and more confusing with the general election less than 100 days away, in Catalonia politicians are overwhelmingly in agreement on at least one fundamental issue: autonomy.

When Señor Anton Canellas, a Catalan politician who is the Christian Democrats' representative in the Opposition's negotiating committee with the Government, hopefully sees Señor Suárez, the Prime Minister, this week he will tell him that Catalonia wants some kind of self-government before the elections.

"If we go into the elections in Catalonia having achieved this, then the elections there will be as aggressive", he said in an interview. Otherwise most of the Catalan political parties might well decide to campaign much more vociferously on a "no-autonomy ticket and make an electoral issue."

Ideally, Canellas would like to see a restoration of the status of 1932, which General Franco suppressed after the civil war, he said. This gave Catalonia its autonomy and its own government—the Generalitat.

But Señor Canellas realises that the possibility of this happening is very slim. It would mean the return from exile in France of Señor Josep Tarradellas, the "president" of the Generalitat, to preside over the elections.

An acceptable formula would be for the Government to accept the spirit of the request and allow an organization made up of the political forces to be established before the elections without calling it the Generalitat.

Señor Canellas and Señor Jordi Pujol, head of Democratic Convergence and the representative for Catalonia as a whole in the opposition's committee, have already presented a document along these lines to the Prime Minister. Señor Pujol resigned from the committee last week but will continue in it until his replacement is found.

For Señor Canellas it is very important that the problem of the different "nationalities"

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a Pasionaria expected to return in April

From Our Correspondent
Madrid, March 21
La Pasionaria, (Señora Dolores Ibarruri) will return to Spain next month for the first time since the Spanish civil war, according to the Communist Party secretary general.

Señora Ibarruri, who is 81 and president of the Spanish Communist Party, has spent 37 years in exile, mainly in Moscow. She attended a party conference in Rome last summer and since then Spanish media along the frontier with France have been alerted to her return, her making an illegal entry.

In the Basque city of Pamplona, Señor José Ignacio Rey acacia, the political secretary of another leftist party, the Union of Marxist Youth, was imprisoned after spending four years in police custody during the war. He was accused of "subversive" activities in Pamplona last week.

£320,000 ransom frees Rome kidnap victim

Rome, March 21.—The son of a wealthy Rome builder, kidnapped two months ago, was set free yesterday in the countryside south of the capital after his family had paid a reported ransom of £320,000, according to police sources.

A doctor said that Signor Stefano Scarozza, a student, was in good condition. He had been kidnapped in Rome on January 26. Three armed bandits grabbed him as he was chatting with his girl friend and several friends in front of a bar.

They hit him over the head with a pistol butt, dragged him into their car and drove off after firing several shots.

Last month, he wrote to his father asking him to pay the ransom and saying that the kidnappers would otherwise kill him. Signor Scarozza was one of 18 kidnap victims in Italy so far this year. Nine remain in the hands of their abductors.

Right wing licks its wounds in France

From Charles Hargrove
Paris, March 21

For once everyone agrees on the broad lines of what happened in yesterday's second ballot of the municipal elections the left scored a resounding success which exceeded its own wildest expectations; the majority took a severe beating; and the centre was practically eliminated.

Only Paris withstood, though not without considerable effort, the buffeting of the red flood at the gates. The credit for this goes entirely to M Jacques Chirac, the Gaullist leader, who, next Friday, will become the first Mayor of the capital in a century.

On the basis of yesterday's results, the Government no longer has a majority in the country. Had parliamentary elections taken place, it would no longer have one in the National Assembly. But then, perhaps middle-of-the-road voters, who gave their support to the Union of the Left out of protest against the Government and the divisions of the majority rather than from enthusiasm for the common leftist programme, would have hesitated when it came to a choice of not municipally but of society.

These local polls were, however, the prelude to the national elections. The opposition has a year to consolidate its gains, and the majority to reverse the tide running against it. And a lot can happen in a year.

The strength of the anti-Government tide is impressive. A week ago, a commentator remarked that there were two winners in the first ballot: M Mitterrand, the Socialist leader, and M Chirac. This time, he notes, there are two-and-a-half: M Mitterrand, M Marchais, the Communist leader, and M Chirac. The left now controls 156 towns out of 221 with a population of over 30,000, the majority's 65. Before March 13, the proportion was just about the reverse.



M Chirac, the Gaullist leader, all smiles after his election as Mayor of Paris.

But the results of yesterday's second ballot have balanced up the score between Socialists and Communists within the Union of the Left. The Socialists are still the dominant force within it; but the Communists more than hold their own. They no longer frighten voters into the other camp. The scarecrow of collectivism is no longer effective, as demonstrated by their victories in Bourges, Le Mans, Reims, and St Etienne.

In those towns, not only Socialists and left-wing Radicals have overcome their repugnance to support a Communist candidate, but even those who backed "marginal" left-wing Gaullists—switched to the sole Communist banner of the opposition's colours. As Le Figaro points out, these elections really mark for M Marchais and his friends, "the end of the ghetto".

This left-wing advance is not reflected in the official statistics published today, but this is nothing unusual. These show that the voting rate was 77.6 per cent—slightly less than the 78.8 per cent in the first ballot the previous Sunday.

In 21 towns of over 100,000 inhabitants with councils up for reelection, including Paris, Lyons, Lille, Marseilles, Montpellier, Rennes, Nantes and Le Mans, the opposition obtained 49.4 per cent of the votes cast, and the majority 49.3 per cent. In the 45 towns with a population of between 100,000 and 30,000, the opposition got 51 per cent of the vote, and the majority 46.6 according to the ministry.

In the 319 towns of 9,000 to 30,000 inhabitants, the score was 49.7 for the majority, and 51.3 for the opposition, and in the municipalities of less than

9,000, which account for more than half of the voters, the majority got 55 per cent and the opposition 32.6.

But according to other estimates, published in today's papers, the left got 51.5 per cent to the majority's 47 per cent in the provinces. In Paris, the left won 45 per cent, two points more than in the presidential, and the majority 55 per cent.

The unity and voting discipline of the municipal elections have pinpointed an important evolution in the middle ground of the electorate. The centrist voters, followers of M Jean Lecanuet and M Servan-Schreiber, have refused to follow their leaders into the government camp and have largely deserted to the left. This makes *Le Quotidien de Paris* remark that the majority has lost in the battle what wanted to be its left wing.

Italian unions angry at IMF loan conditions

From Peter Nichols
Rome, March 21

Signor Andreotti, the Prime Minister, began consultations today with political parties, extreme right, seeking support for his acceptance of the International Monetary Fund's conditions for the granting of standby credits of \$530m (£310m) for Italy.

The fate of the Government is uncertain, and the strains are beginning to tell. Signor Enrico Berlinguer, the Communist leader, was well enough today to prepare for his meeting with the Prime Minister after having been ill with food poisoning.

But Signor Benigno Zaccagnini, the secretary of the governing Christian Democratic Party, was today ordered by his doctors to rest for a week and remained at his home in Ferrara.

The Prime Minister is thus facing by himself the embarrassment of his Communist semi-supporters at having to contemplate the conditions of the IMF and the anger of the trade unions, which called a general strike in the Rome area for Wednesday.

At the end of the week he is to attend a meeting of the EEC heads of government.

Before his illness, Signor Zaccagnini stated that the present arrangement with the Communists was the only strategy to maintain the country's institutional and democratic framework. He saw the need, however, of a "frank and loyal clarification on the part of all the political forces which in various ways support Signor Andreotti's government".

Signor Giorgio Amendola, a member of the Communist leadership, speaking at the con-

gress of the Milan Communist Party, made it clear that the Communists did not intend bringing down the Government. The seriousness of the situation called for "extreme caution".

These two statements suggest that Signor Andreotti has nothing to fear. The dangers, however, are not from the official leadership either of his own party or of the Communists. Elements in both parties are becoming restive and, for the first time since the Government was formed after the June general election, the unions are in a fighting mood. They object in particular to two government measures now before Parliament which the Prime Minister claims are vital to obtaining the IMF loan.

These measures seek to slow down wage rises by excluding increases in indirect taxation from the calculation of the cost of living to which wage rates are tied. The other discourages wage rises negotiated at factory level.

Signor Giorgio Benvenuto, secretary of the smallest of the three main trade union federations, casts doubt on the wisdom of accepting the loan on such conditions. He accuses the IMF negotiators of having come to the aid of the enemies of the unions and of the parties of the left.

The real dilemma remains that shared by Signor Andreotti and Signor Berlinguer, the Prime Minister has to show flexibility in an attempt to save both the loan and his Government while the Communist leader has to show the same degree of flexibility in order to keep the Government in power while not setting the Communist Party against the unions.

Plea on direct elections

From Our Own Correspondent
Brussels, March 21

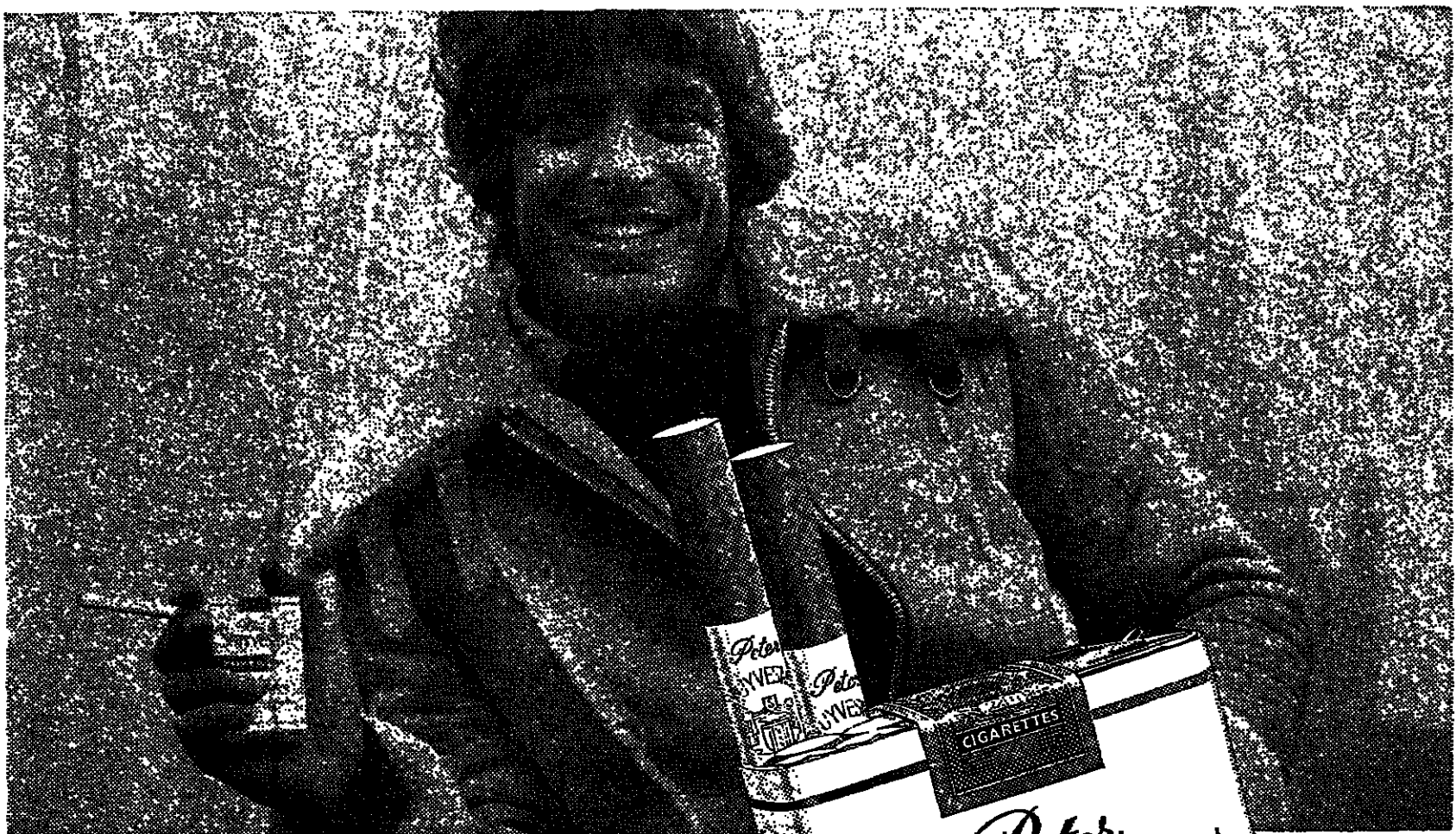
Mr Christopher Tugendhat, the European Commissioner for budgetary affairs, today urged British Conservatives to back the efforts of Mr Callaghan to meet next year's deadline for the introduction of direct elections to the European Parliament.

The Prime Minister and his

colleagues would require much political courage to press ahead, Mr Tugendhat said. But they would need the help of the Conservative Party. "The Government cannot hope to carry off successfully a large section of the Parliamentary Labour Party without opposition support", he told a meeting of the British Conservative Association in Belgium.

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OVERSEAS

Americans fight ban on saccharin despite implied choice between overweight and cancer

From Patrick Brogan, Washington, March 21

The great saccharin war is going badly for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). That body announced early this month that saccharin could cause cancer and therefore banned it under a 20-year-old law.

The food industry, the makers of saccharin and the millions of Americans who are addicted to it, are fighting the ban. They claim that the law will prove unenforceable and that the ban on saccharin will go the way of laws meant to compel people to wear car safety belts.

A committee of the House of Representatives held hearings today at which a series of witnesses denounced the FDA. They questioned its scientific methods, its intelligence and its morality. They claimed that Americans had the constitutional right to eat saccharin if they wished and that attempts to prevent them from doing so were infringements on their liberties.

Experiments conducted in Canada show that if rats are fed large quantities of saccharin they will eventually develop cancer. The law says that this is sufficient evidence that the substance causes cancer and must therefore be banned.

The FDA admits that human beings would have to consume impossible quantities of saccharin before they had ingested proportionally the same amount that proved fatal to the Canadian rats. It insists, however, on the validity of its conclusions.

The American public does not appear to be in a mood to believe the experts. Sugar is fattening and Americans are overweight. Large numbers therefore take saccharin in their coffee. It comes in little paper packets, coyly named "sweet 'n' low". They drink "diet-Coke" of various sorts, liquids sweetened with saccharin rather than sugar.

Americans are addicted to sweet things and are furious at being faced with the choice of

overweight or cancer. It is pointed out that tobacco is far more deadly: hundreds of thousands of smokers kill themselves every year and the Government does nothing about it. The Government is also considering a suggestion to legalize the use of marijuana, although there is considerable evidence that it can be harmful.

Diabetics are particularly incensed. They cannot eat sugar and rely on saccharin to make their food and drink palatable. Now it is to be taken away from them. Some have suggested that the solution might be to label sweet drinks and sweeteners the way cigarettes are labelled, with a health warning.

The law is categorical, however, and saccharin has been banned and will stay banned until the law is changed. The chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Trade Committee said today that the law would not be changed precipitously, but the pressure is on to do just that.

Dr Castro says no Cubans are in Zaire

Continued from page 1

The Soviet Union and its allies. However, there are believed to be a number of Cubans engaged in training guerrillas in camps in Zaire and Mozambique. With large numbers of Cuban troops already engaged in Angola, Western analysts here believe that Cuba would be unwilling to undertake another costly military operation in southern Africa at this stage.

Although no official communiqué was issued at the end of his visit, Dr Castro's public remarks on the question of foreign involvement in the southern African conflict are in line with President Nyerere's thinking. The Tanzanian leader has frequently made it clear that he does not want southern Africa to be turned into an international battlefield. However, he has also given warning that if South African troops become engaged in Rhodesia the front line states would have to consider seeking outside support.

Asked about Cuban involvement in the Angolan conflict, Dr Castro said Cuban troops had only been committed when "an invasion from abroad, mainly South Africa, took place". The Angolans had the right to seek Cuban assistance in such circumstances, he said.

This explanation of events in Angola is widely accepted by many African countries, particularly Tanzania where Cuba's actions in support of the Popular Movement (MPLA) against the two pro-Western nationalist organizations, FNLA and Unita, is generally approved. The Western view, that Cuba was an invading force against the interests of the Soviet Union, is not given much credence here.

Dr Castro strongly denied press reports that Cuba was involved in the fighting in the Shaba province of Zaire. "There is not a single Cuban involved," he said. "We have nothing to do with it at all and we have not equipped or trained the forces which are fighting the ruling clique in Zaire."

The next stage on Dr Castro's Zaire mystery tour turned out to be Beira, Mozambique, where he arrived later today. It was not known until several hours after his departure where his next destination was or where he would be going after Mozambique.

Although it seemed likely he would visit Zambia on his way to Angola, his reception in Lusaka is unlikely to be as warm as in Tanzania. President Kaunda is only too aware of the potential destabilizing influence of Cuba and the Soviet Union and at the time of the Angolan war a year ago he warned Zambians to beware of "a plundering tiger and its deadly cub coming through the back door".

By including Zambia in his itinerary, Dr Castro will be visiting all of the front line states except Botswana. Although primarily seen as a flag-waving exercise, the timing of his tour is significant, coming as it does when Mr Ian Smith is trying to gather support for an internal settlement in Rhodesia and while the Patriotic Front of Mr Joshua Nkomo and Mr Robert Mugabe is intent on stepping up the guerrilla war.

Britons in Greek prison visited by consul

From Mario Modiano, Athens, March 21

The growing British colony at Korydallos prison, near Piraeus, were visited today by Mr John Forbes-Meyler, the British Consul, who went to make sure that the prisoners were being properly treated and had the required legal assistance.

First he saw the five aircraft spotters jailed on espionage charges on Friday after failing to persuade the judges that aircraft spotting was their hobby. The Consul found three of them in the main prison complex in separate cells. The other two were in the juvenile section. One, Mr Christopher Taylor, was allowed to see his mother.

Hunger striker wins better conditions

From Our Correspondent, Jerusalem, March 21

A Gaza prisoner who was one of the leaders of the six-week hunger strike in Ashkelon jail, which recently resumed, has won an order from Israel's High Court, requiring the Prisons Commissioner to show cause within 20 days why he should not be given humane conditions.

Muhammad Mahdi Basaso complained to the court in an affidavit that he was being held under intolerable conditions and that the prison authorities were "deliberately endangering his life".

The affidavit asked the court to order the Prisons Commissioner to provide him with a clean place to sleep, a change of clothing, washing facilities, daily exercise, medical attention and the right to receive visits and newspapers.

It alleged that after he and others called the second hunger strike in Ashkelon on February 24 he was transferred under army control to an unknown place where he was imprisoned in "a filthy hovel, from which he cannot see the light of day and is denied medical attention, clean clothes and washing facilities".

It accuses the Prisons Commissioner of trying to break him, mentally and physically,

through isolation and of being "interested in seeing his health deteriorate, placing his life in danger". It maintains that the aims of the hunger strike were legal, modest and acceptable to all persons with a conscience and charges that the Prisons Commissioner's actions violate basic human rights.

The order, issued by Mr Justice Ben-Sion Sharansky on Friday, calls on the Prisons Commissioner to show cause why he should not comply with the demands of Mr Basaso, who is serving a 15-year sentence as a terrorist infiltrator.

His lawyer, Mrs Felicia Anger, claimed today that he was being kept in a small space without light for 24 hours a day and was still on hunger strike. He was in a weak condition. The International Red Cross had been asked to intercede.

Several other hunger strike leaders, it is understood, have been transferred to other jails and as a result the prison authorities claim that the strike at Ashkelon is over, but lawyers for some of the men say they are continuing to refuse food individually.

The first strike at Ashkelon began on December 10 and involved nearly 400 Arabs.

About 215 resumed the hunger strike on February 24

Mr Arafat pins his hopes on President Carter

Cairo, March 21.—Mr Yasser Arafat, unanimously re-elected chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation yesterday, has said that he hopes President Carter still understands the Palestinian cause.

Speaking after the thirteenth session of the Palestine National Council yesterday, Mr Arafat regretted that State Department officials had gone back on Mr Carter's recent verbal support for a Palestinian homeland.

"This retreat has created a bad impression on the national council," he said. "I hope, despite that, that President Carter understands our cause, our rights and the suffering we have endured. My confidence in the American people, who have elected presidents like Abraham Lincoln and (Woodrow) Wilson, remains great."

The Palestinian leader confirmed that the extremist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Mr George Habash, had refused to join the new Executive Committee, but he refused to condemn the group and emphasized that it had asked him to represent it on the committee—Agence France-Press.

Jerusalem, March 21.—The Palestinian movement's decision to take a tougher line on Middle East peace moves showed the world that Israel had been right to treat it as an extremist, Israeli officials said today.

The Palestine National Council last night adopted a 15-point programme reaffirming the strategic aim of dismantling the Jewish state and setting stringent conditions for peace talks.

"They are divided between extremists and even more extremists," Mr Yigal Allon, the Foreign Minister, commented today on Israeli radio. He called for "a positive plan to solve the Palestinian problem within the framework of peace with Jordan."

Mr Rabin, the Prime Minister, said last night that the Cairo decisions justified Israel's refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian movement. "The only place we will meet is on a battlefield," he added—Reuters.

Man with hostages wants to fly to Uganda

Toronto, March 21.—A man armed with a shotgun seized up to 18 hostages in a bank here today and demanded to be taken to Uganda, police said.

The man said he wanted to take four hostages and a senior police official with him to the airport, where he demanded that an aircraft be waiting. Police talked to him by telephone.

The consul inquired about three London women held in Korydallos pending trial on charges of possessing and circulating counterfeit banknotes.

Greek protest at move to abolish siesta

Athens, March 21.—More than half the shops in Greece stayed closed today in a 24-hour protest strike by shopkeepers and employees against the abolition of the siesta.

The decision to abolish the three-hour midday break and have all shops and firms working from 9 am to 5.30 pm was taken by the Government last month in an effort to cut oil imports. The measure was introduced for a trial period until May 15.

Shopkeepers fear that it would harm business and employees say that it would upset their living habits. It would also cost more to eat lunch in a restaurant than at home where they return during the break—Reuters.



Mr Brezhnev yesterday: "We will not tolerate interference from anyone."

Brezhnev Middle East peace plan

Continued from page 1

charges that human rights were violated and dissent suppressed in the Soviet Union. This was the first time a Russian leader has discussed the question of dissidents at such length in public.

"Our opponents would like to find some sort of forces opposed to socialism inside our countries," Mr Brezhnev said. But since these did not exist, "the semblance of an internal opposition is being created by false publicity."

It was not forbidden to think differently from the majority in the Soviet Union, and "conscientious critics" were welcomed.

Mr Brezhnev also suggested that the Soviet Union, the United States and other countries supplying weapons to the Middle East could study ways of ending the arms race there—an echo of President Carter's recent call for restraint in foreign arms sales.

A final peace document or documents should outlaw the acquisition of territory by war and ensure the rights of all Middle East states to independence and security, as well as guaranteeing the Palestinians rights to create their own state, the Soviet leader said.

As part of an eventual settlement, the Soviet plan foresaw Israel's withdrawal from all territories it occupied in 1967. Appropriate borders between Israel and its Arab neighbours—Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon—should be clearly defined and declared "finally established and inviolable".

The state of war would end with the completion of the Israeli withdrawals—Reuters.

Mr Brezhnev set out a programme for developing relations with the United States, listing "four concrete aims" which Moscow believed could be attained.

These were a new SALT treaty; joint initiatives in banning and destroying the most lethal chemical weapons, and other measures to restrain the arms race; developing trade and economic ties; and joint action to achieve a settlement in the Middle East.

His detailed plan to bring an end to the Arab-Israeli dispute included an agreed schedule allowing for Israeli withdrawals from occupied Arab lands by stages "in the course of, say, several months."

Another apparently new Soviet proposal was the creation of demilitarized zones in the Middle East, with United Nations observer teams which could include Russian, American, British and French representatives.

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The state of war would end with the completion of the Israeli withdrawals—Reuters.

Politician prefers jail to Bhutto talks

From Our Correspondent, Rawalpindi, March 21

Air Marshal Asghar Khan, one of Pakistan's jailed Opposition leaders, is adopting a stiffer attitude on the question of dialogue with the Government.

Today he refused to leave his prison cell in Lahore although told by the prison superintendent that he was being released so that he could attend a meeting of the nine-party Pakistan National Alliance to discuss the Prime Minister's latest offer of talks on alleged malpractices in the elections on March 7. The retired air marshal brushed aside the idea of holding talks with Mr Bhutto saying it was "outrageous" for the alliance to consider any such move. He would not leave his prison cell until the Government announced on the radio the lifting of the emergency, which was enforced six years ago, and the release of all political prisoners and detainees in the country.

Both these demands figure for the first time as a precondition to talks with the Government about the elections which the Opposition claims were rigged.

Several other jailed leaders of the Pakistan National Alliance, which mounted a campaign of civil disobedience after the poll results, have been freed. They are expected to meet in Lahore tomorrow to consider Mr

Bhutto's third successive offer to the Opposition to abandon its agitation on the streets and sit down for serious talks on specific issues relating to the elections. Mufti Mahmud, the president of the alliance, had told the Prime Minister that his offer could only be discussed if alliance leaders were freed.

While the alliance seems to be divided on the question of accepting Mr Bhutto's approach, the defeat of Mrs Gandhi in the Indian election has emboldened a faction in the Opposition which believes that the Indian Opposition has blazed a new trail.

Two districts of Karachi remain under curfew. Troops are on patrol with machine guns fixed to vehicles. The curfew was imposed on Saturday evening after rioting but the reduction today of the period for shopping and other domestic chores from four hours to two hours in the west district of Karachi indicates that the situation is far from normal.

According to unofficial reports, six people were killed for violating curfew restrictions yesterday. More deaths were reported today.

In Hyderabad, 120 miles from Karachi, 17 people were reported killed in a clash yesterday between civil armed forces and demonstrators. About 100 were injured.

Ashanti chiefs hold durbar for the Prince of Wales

Kumasi, March 21.—The Prince of Wales today attended a grand durbar held in his honour by the chiefs and people of Ashanti in central Ghana.

Asawtsehem (King) Ocranuo Opoku Ware II told the Prince that the chiefs and people of Ghana cherished their many years of happy association with Britain. He presented the Prince with a number of gifts, including a shield with a carved sword and a gun laid across, which he said symbolized a warrior.

The Asawtsehem also gave the Prince a necklace made of beads and inter-woven with gold to be given to the Queen to mark her silver jubilee.

Replying, the Prince recalled that in spite of the stormy early relations between Britain and Ashanti, each nation had come to know and respect the courage, enterprise and determination of the other. He went on to praise Ghana's policy of self reliance.

The Prince, who arrived in Ghana on Thursday for an eight-day official visit, is expected to fly to Bolgatanga in northern Ghana, tomorrow—Reuters.

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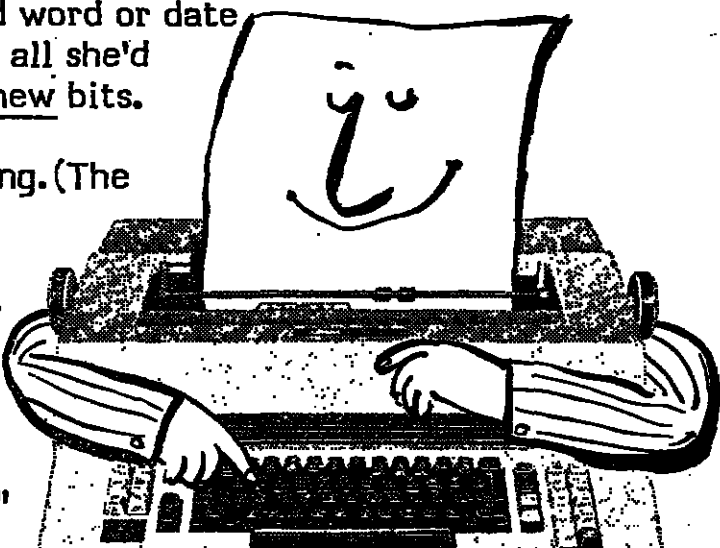
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THE ARTS

Prokofiev as propagandist

NPO/Muti
Festival Hall

Thomas Walker

Like the Eisenstein film from which it is drawn, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* is one of the most compelling works of propaganda that Soviet culture has produced. With the Second World War fast approaching, it called on the Russian people to sacrifice, even evoking an image of German invasion in its battle of resistance against the Teutonic Knights. Western material of similar intent, at least such of it as I know, is crude by comparison.

To me *Alexander Nevsky* is also a work of unique sadness, written against a background of contained proletarian revolution and surviving imperialism. Sad, too, because of its intense nationalism that betokens the political degeneration of the first workers' state.

Sunday's performance by Muti and the New Philharmonia Orchestra was brilliantly controlled yet forcible, indeed stirring. I had not noticed before just how finely shaded is Prokofiev's orchestral palette nor how many levels of depiction the battle scene embraces. Even the counterpoints seemed justified and uncontrived.

Daniel Wayenberg
Queen Elizabeth Hall

Joan Chissell

Before approaching Russia, the Dutch pianist, Daniel Wayenberg, divided the first half of his recital on Sunday afternoon somewhat unusually between Liszt and Scriabin.

Many a pianist might prefer to play himself in before plunging into such a hothead of trouble as Liszt's B Minor Sonata. Mr. Wayenberg chose to tackle it first. His most valuable asset was the full, weighty tone he could bring to the grandioso second subject, to the ominous *pesante* chords towards the end of the exposition, and to the expansive climax of the Andante sostenuto section. But he was often in trouble when he was in the triplets, the *triplé* challenges near the start or the fiery outbursts near the end. He also somewhat muddled the texture at other moments of heightened excitement.

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There was much superb playing from the wind and some of the string textures, such as the whistlers at battle's end, were astoundingly delicate.

The Moscow-born mezzo-soprano Irina Arkhipova imparted to the "Field of the Dead" just the right tone of voice-covered steel. Not the least sacrifice was demanded of the New Philharmonia Chorus; singing *Alexander Nevsky* is a bit like shouting down a bottomless pit. I am not qualified to judge their Russian accents, but in other respects they merited nomination for the Order of Lenin.

Earlier we heard music of 1909 by Stravinsky and Prokofiev. The *Scherzo fantastique* (Op. 3), like other early works of Stravinsky is early eclecticism, echoing his teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky (in particular, I think, the *Scherzo* of his Piano Sonata), Wagner and, oddly, Dukas's *L'apprenti sorcier*.

It is a tour de force of orchestration, and offered excellent scope to the agility of the NPO's strings and wind alike, with special honours for Clifford Seville's alto flute playing. Prokofiev's *Sinfonia* is a piece of filtered juvenilia, having been revised more than once, and shows the composer in a pleasantly uncommitted, or perhaps merely unsubsidized vein.

A group of preludes by Rachmaninov told the same tale of generous romantic impulse but insufficient pianistic finesse. His right hand lacked the essential clarity at the start of Op. 23 No. 2 in B flat. In the popular Op. 23 No. 5 in G major the rich nostalgia of his middle section was spoiled by a rushed, confused recapitulation. Even Op. 32 No. 5 was insufficiently light and limpid. But he found the lyrical warmth for Op. 23 No. 4 in D.

Stravinsky transcribed his three movements from *Petrushka* for Arthur Schnitzler, and the result was a masterpiece of technique. Mr. Wayenberg bravely tackled them right up to time, was plainly too taxed to do all that he would like to have done in colouring. But there were some telling outbursts of temperament in the *Petrushka*, besides some boldly delineated revelry in the last.

Mr. Wayenberg's ear was nevertheless at its keenest in the precisely calculated sonorities of Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke Nos 7 and 8*, and all praise to him for making room for them.

Hideko Udagawa
Queen Elizabeth Hall

Max Harrison

Germain's *Violin Sonata* in A major is not a piece with much personality and is likely to disappoint those who remember Tartini's description of that composer as "il furibondo *Geminiani*". Hideko Udagawa brought a sweet tone to its opening Andante, however, and moved fluently through the predictable patterns of the succeeding quick movements. Perhaps it is enough that such a work sets a performer's fingers going and focuses the listeners' attention, preparing them for something better.

On Sunday the something better, still in A major, was Brahms's *Sonata* Op. 100. At first Miss Udagawa's tone was neither large nor powerful enough to convey all her intentions on phrasing, and the result in the first movement's earlier pages was sketchy. A firmer interpretative grasp was apparent in the Andante, but the different events of the Finale seemed insufficiently characterized, too much submerged in the music's general flow. In the *Geminiani*, Germain Bésus's role at the piano was mainly supportive, but for Brahms more active participation than he gave is necessary.

More impressive was Miss Udagawa's account of the unaccompanied Bach D minor Partita in which she seemed to have no difficulties of execution at all. Each movement was clear and whole, although perhaps on too small a scale. With one exception, the gaunt, almost harsh, structures were smoothed down, nearly domesticated. The exception was the concluding Chaconne, which is unlikely ever to be domesticated, for here the music's grandeur imposes itself on player and audience equally.

Unlike the earlier Bach movements, a brace of Paganini Caprices, also for unaccompanied violin, seemed to benefit from having their bristling technical difficulties tamed so immaculately. Finally came a happy ending, since Miss Udagawa, with Mr. Bésus back at the piano, achieved complete identification with Prokofiev's *Sonata* Op. 94, especially with its gawky humour.

Dirk Bogarde in new Fassbinder film

Dirk Bogarde is to play the lead in the new Rainer Werner Fassbinder film, *Despair*. The picture, to be produced by Bavaria Film Studios in Munich, is based on a script by Tom Stoppard from a novel by Vladimir Nabokov.

Production starts at Bavaria's Geiselgasteig Studios in Munich on April 18, and continues on locations in Berlin and on the North Sea coast. The only other star so far is the French actress, Andrea Ferrel.

Despair, to be made in English, is a thriller in which a man, seeking his identity, commits murder both to rid himself of a "double" and of his dim-witted wife.

Some of the notices on this page are repeated from yesterday's later editions.



Franco Zeffirelli on location in Tunisia

Zeffirelli on his film on Jesus

Franco Zeffirelli was in Twickenham over the weekend finishing off the soundtrack on the Italian version of *Jesus of Nazareth*. The ATR/RAI co-production goes out in two transmissions of just under and just over three hours on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday with commercial breaks America sees it by courtesy of NBC also in two slices, but without commercials. Italy will view five episodes of an hour and 20 minutes each.

This was one of the reasons why the music did not fit the Italian credit titles precisely. After two or three different attempts at re-phrasing the sound came up on trumpet suddenly came up from frame 759.

FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI
The studio tensions were at once broken. Laughter all round and a break for whisky.

Zeffirelli may well get his own infamy, on and off screen, when *Jesus* has been transmitted. At the moment his personal praise goes in the first place to Robert Powell in the title role. Powell acts above all with his eyes, the camera is constantly moving on those two blue orbs, which have the dazzle of an Italian mosaic.

"Robert was the reason why I finally decided to take two years out of my life and make the film," Zeffirelli confessed. "I first had to clear my conscience and assure myself that I could not abandon the whole project when Robert Powell came along. We first thought of casting him as a radical, inverted Jesus, and then I began looking at those eyes you mentioned. Do you remember what Clark Gable once said? 'I didn't make my career on my looks or my voice, but on my left eye.' I think Robert is going to make his

career on both his eyes, for at all times they control the screen. Cinema and television are about how people look at you. Robert's eyes are quite extraordinary. He's a little short-sighted—or is it long-sighted?—and his focus is a shade behind and above your head. You are at once in awe and respect; you feel guilty even when he is being gentle. The spell of our Jesus is in his eyes."

Did Franco Zeffirelli start with a visual concept of Christ? "Absolutely not. That is why I considered both Hoffman and Pacino, who would have cut totally different figures. I have been attacked, as my dear mentor Visconti was attacked, for too much indulgence in aesthetics. You may see on screen at one moment the Christ of a seventeenth-century Spanish master, or the Christ of Dürer, but that is entirely accidental. I didn't make this film to demonstrate my attitude to art; good taste should be there without going back to specific paintings."

Will the commercial breaks in this country upset the flow? "At first I thought they would; now I feel they might be an actual advantage. The problem with this story, and it is the finest story in the world, is that it is too intense—not so much at the beginning, but from the moment Christ starts to attract a following there is

no break in the tension. It is like an opera with too many fantastic arias and not enough recitative; the breaks will allow the audience to breathe."

Even before the film has been transmitted voices have been raised against it. Has Franco Zeffirelli been upset by them? "In the beginning we positively welcomed complaints, interference, opinions, advice. That is why I engaged four religious consultants, one Catholic, one Anglican, one Jewish and one Moslem. They were not a panel, but four experts to whom we could turn. But if you are referring to the vulgarities of this college campaign in America, then I am not concerned. They accuse me of blasphemy when they have seen nothing of the film. The only basis for the attacks is an interview I gave while we were filming in Tunisia, when I said that I wanted to remove the mythology. The comparison I made was with a picture which has been so lacquered and varnished that you cannot see the real painting beneath. People don't like to see the real Jesus, they want to live in a dream, land with Him. They don't accept that He was a man, so they make of the cross a pretty symbol to hang around the neck rather than realize that it was an element of torture. So the mythology will be taken away."

John Higgins

Oscar Araiz gives Paris two Mahler ballets

Gustav Mahler shows no sign of losing his place as the young choreographer's favourite composer. John Neumeier, who dedicated a whole festival to him in Hamburg last year, is in London working on another symphony, the Fourth, for Covent Garden, and in Paris the new programme by the Ballet de l'Opéra contains two Mahler ballets by Oscar Araiz.

One of them is the *Adagietto* from the Fifth Symphony. Most previous dances to this which I have seen laid a heavy emotional emphasis on the melancholy which led Visconti to use the music for *Death in Venice*. Araiz lets the emotion remain implicit and merely sets his two dancers moving gently to the music. That restraint is one of the reasons why I find his version the most pleasing of all.

The movement is beautifully fluent, with Dominique Khaloui suspended for much of the time in Michael Denard's arms, but turning and twisting around him, supple as a fish. The dance is built upon a slow plasticity far removed from a classical dancer's usual style, but it suits this handsome couple to perfection.

The other new work at the Opéra is *Mahler's Lieder*, comprising the songs of a *Wegener* and an epilogue from the *Rückert Lieder*. By coincidence, Nureyev was dancing another version of the *Wegener* in Paris during the week of the premiere.

For an English visitor, the main interest of the Nureyev programme was to see the way he danced the latest addition to his repertoire, *Pierrot Lunaire*, tumbling through the high scaffolding of Ter-Antunian's decor with a daring and physical control which matched his complete intellectual grasp of the character, whom he makes much more comic than usual and consequently more tragic too by contrast. But the choreography which Béjart created for Nureyev in *Songes d'un Werfuer* also maintains and even increases its interest the more one sees it.

Béjart matched the different moods of the songs by various stages on one man's journey through life. Araiz sets each song in a completely different choreographic mode. The most striking is "Ich hab' ein glühend Messer", which he sets in the fiercely tragic and austere expressionist style of the German dancer Dore Boyer who was one of his influential teachers. Wilfride Poullet brings a wild intensity to its

convulsive thrusts and thrashings.

"Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld" becomes a trippingly pretty trio for three young women each carrying a flower, leading into a lyrical duet for one of them. Marie-Josée Redont, with Patrick Dupond, Jean Guizerix is the leading male soloist, his sorrow contrasted with the gaiety of France Merovak in the first duet and finding its match when he is paired with Francesca Zumbo for the last.

Araiz brings all these dancers and styles together for *Welt abhanden gekommen*, and the measure of his achievement is that he succeeds in reconciling the different modes into one expression of grieving acceptance. It is a work of great individuality and power,

which expands richly on the big stage without losing the concentration of an earlier stage production I saw last year in Hamburg.

At 36, Araiz is one of the most prolific, original and interesting choreographers working today. He has directed his own company in his native Argentina and mounted his ballets in three continents, but is still comparatively unknown in Europe. All the more credit to the Paris Opéra for inviting him, as part of a policy of diversification which has already given its dancers creations by Merce Cunningham and Glen Tetley.

With such a record of worthwhile experiment on his main stage, I cannot understand why the Opéra's director, Rolf Liebermann feels obliged to con-

tinue the unrelenting work of the Groupe de Recherches Théâtrales he set up a few years ago. Intended as a free collaboration by creators from various disciplines, it seems to have dwindled into a vehicle for Carolyn Carlson, a dancer and choreographer of meagre talent.

Her latest productions, *This and That*, have been playing in alternation as an early-evening show at the Théâtre de la Ville; they are due to become a triptych with the addition of *The Order*. The first of the series, although seriously intended, looks like a crude burlesque of what would have passed for experimental theatre a decade ago. Disjointed entries, falling repeated glances, fragments of speech and song drag their incoherent way through one of the longest hours I have ever endured.

Just how well "total theatre" can work in the right hands is shown by Maurice Béjart's *Le Molière Imaginaire*, which has been enjoying an immensely successful run at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Béjart himself took over the role created by Robert Hirsch in a gala at the Comédie-Française. He is the mature Molière in a spectacle which traces the playwright's life and work in the context of his time.

Jorge Donn as Louis XIV makes his first entry dressed as Apollo, descending from the flies in a sunburst; literally as *deus ex machina*. His pompous dance contrasts with another in which, stripped of his golden finery, he displays a prodigious virtuoso technique.

Commedia dell'arte comic ensembles, a danced hymn to young love, wistful songs, all play their part; the mood is varied with adroit skill at every turn.

One can imagine more subtle acting of the dramatic interludes, but those too make a contribution to the total effect, and the music of Nino Rota, somewhat à la mode de *Lully* but modern in feeling, is full of enjoyable tunes, whether jolly or triste. Presumably because it uses a lot of speech which could not be well translated from the French, this show will not be included in Béjart's London season next month, but the standard of performance all through suggests that one need have no worries about the quality of the company he will be bringing.

John Percival

Mahlers Lieder: Francesca Zumbo and Jean Guizerix

convulsive thrusts and thrashings.

"Ging heut' Morgen über's Feld" becomes a trippingly pretty trio for three young women each carrying a flower, leading into a lyrical duet for one of them. Marie-Josée Redont, with Patrick Dupond, Jean Guizerix is the leading male soloist, his sorrow contrasted with the gaiety of France Merovak in the first duet and finding its match when he is paired with Francesca Zumbo for the last.

Araiz brings all these dancers and styles together for *Welt abhanden gekommen*, and the measure of his achievement is that he succeeds in reconciling the different modes into one expression of grieving acceptance. It is a work of great individuality and power,

which expands richly on the big stage without losing the concentration of an earlier stage production I saw last year in Hamburg.

At 36, Araiz is one of the most prolific, original and interesting choreographers working today. He has directed his own company in his native Argentina and mounted his ballets in three continents, but is still comparatively unknown in Europe. All the more credit to the Paris Opéra for inviting him, as part of a policy of diversification which has already given its dancers creations by Merce Cunningham and Glen Tetley.

With such a record of worthwhile experiment on his main stage, I cannot understand why the Opéra's director, Rolf Liebermann feels obliged to con-

Maker of earthworks

Perhaps some medieval or Renaissance artist tumbled from the scaffolding while painting a fresco, but I cannot recall his name. By comparison the mortality of recent artists in the practice of their art seems to have been relatively greater. In 1969 an Austrian "body" artist Rudolf Schwarzkogler, after attempting to castrate himself, threw himself from a fourth floor window and was killed. The American artist, Robert Smithson, who projected vast earthworks and managed to get a few made, was killed in 1973 while surveying the site for one of these works, *Amarillo Ramp*, when the plane in which he was flying stalled and crashed.

Schwarzkogler's death was presumably intended as a final artistic gesture. Smithson's was not premeditated. None the less there seems to be an undercurrent of suggestion through the catalogue of the exhibition of Smithson's drawings (new at the Arnolfini in Bristol) that his death was in a sense inevitable, or at least that his work was obsessed with death. Thus the "Chronology" and "Selected Exhibitions" a list of deaths: "nine year old brother Harold had died of leukemia in 1936", his school-friend, Danny Donahue "killed in Brooklyn motorcycle accident", "Aunt Julia Duke in 'Married' Nancy Holt's parents died. Close friend Charlie Bonjorno dies."

"Father dies." This sounds a little like the promotion of a death cult, as most people have friends and relatives who die. Nevertheless it seems true that Smithson's work was much concerned with the process of decay and change. His best-known executed work, *Spiral Jetty*, made in 1970 in the Great Salt Lake in Utah, has been continually eroded, and now under 2ft of water, and will no doubt eventually disappear, surviving only in photographs and descriptions.

And Smithson's death while surveying a site for a work seems typical of the total way in which he threw himself into his work. This at least comes across in the exhibition, which is supplemented by photographs of the four completed works (*Amarillo Ramp* was constructed after his death under the direction of his wife and friend) and the film which Smithson made about the building of *Spiral Jetty*.

Another useful (or, maybe, irrelevant) piece of information contained in the "Chronology" is that Smithson was born in Rutherford, "Paterson" New Jersey, and was delivered by William Carlos Williams's assistant! Williams was his pediatrician and Smithson went back to visit him when he was 21.

Like many of his generation of American artists he was born in 1938) he wrote articulately about his own work and the work of other artists which interested him. Although Smithson planned to make vast visual statements on the earth, his drawings show a literary bent and a sense of the language of 1966 is a drawing on graph paper of a hill (or heap) made of hand-written words, and others are full of captions and comments. His drawing style is close to that of the cartoonist, the most literary of artists, although whether any of his owned anything to that marvellous and humane doctor-poet who was his pediatrician, I do not know.

In an essay in the catalogue, Joseph Maclellan writes: "Few, if any, of Smithson's drawings are at all lovely (except when their very drabness achieves an expressionist elegance; some are on the contrary, either interesting—in the sense of 'curious'—or else downright ugly."

"Gross" is presumably a more gutsy American equivalent of the public-school English "grody". Actually neither word is particularly accurate. They are, as I have said, like a cartoonist's drawings and also a bit like the drawings of men who get things built, architects and engineers. (The first drawings in which they work out an idea before turning it over to a draughtsman to tidy up.)

With the Department of Health and Social Security Breakwell worked as a diarist in special security mental hospitals. The report which came out from the work Breakwell did here with the Architects' group is covered by the Official Secrets Act, as are his diaries for most of the year 1976. But there can be no doubt that a perceptive and imaginative observer here found employment by the state for an important social purpose. Breakwell will talk about his placements (subject of course to the OSA) with other artists who have been associated with the Artist Placement Group, on Wednesday at 7.15 pm and with other diarists about diary writing tomorrow at 7.15 at the ICA.

Paul Overy

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Bernard Levin

Let us get one thing clear, this craven Labour Government has to go

Much has been written about what is going to happen in the House of Commons tomorrow night. David Wood yesterday discussed what had happened so far, my business, however, is neither prophecy nor history, but the thrusting of unsolicited advice on anyone who keeps still long enough to have it thrust, and I shall therefore now address myself to the question of what should happen. What should happen is that the Government should be defeated.

There are, of course, serious arguments to be faced even by those who wish this Government ill, think that it has brought the country low and will yet bring it lower, and would be glad to see it replaced by another. To state with an incoherent Conservative Chancellor would have to produce even a delayed Budget with undesirable haste, and before he got down to doing so a good deal of time and even more thought would have to be given by Mrs Thatcher to the question of his identity, since her choice for that post, above all, would indicate, and to a considerable extent determine, the kind of policies she intends to follow.

Then again, it can be argued that the counter-inflationary policy (is there no sponge of fact or failure big enough and soapy enough to wipe the satisfied, ambitious smirk from the face of Mr. Hattersley?), though it came too late and consists of too little, is now being pursued seriously by at least some of the Cabinet, and that this is no time to take the whole argument, including

the very existence of an incomes and prices policy, back to first principles. And in addition to that, there is a case for regarding the present situation—a Government which would do positive harm if it could but is precluded from doing so by the lack of a parliamentary majority—as the best available, better even than a Conservative Government actually doing good. There is even, as a make-weight, the long-term argument that a defeat now would bring the left much closer to control of the Labour Party, and thus bring the country more deeply into the danger that such a Labour Party might sooner or later come to power by default.

These arguments are not to be ignored. But they are not to be accepted, either. The country has not to be given the opportunity of pronouncing not on this or that policy or proposal, but on the broken promise or fulfilled pledge, this or that governmental truth or falsehood upon a question that goes to the heart of Britain's political and economic future—indeed, of Britain's future without the qualification even of such all-encompassing adjectives as those. We have to decide whether a Government which has lost its collective political nerve, led by a Prime Minister notorious for never having had any to start with, is to be allowed to continue in office without anything like the blunt instrument devised largely for use by the regime against anything looking a little red.

Politics apart, the students now have so great an accumulation of grievances that their comparative quietude since the great rebellion of 1967 and 1968 is surprising in itself. The communists may argue that the new violence is unexpected and politically inspired by forces anxious to destroy the idea that Italy is governable only with the cooperation of the communists.

The demands of the students in 1968 were for reforms. A Reform Bill (which many students dislike) is still, after nine years, winding its way through Parliament. There are about a million students in Italy and about another million graduates who cannot find work. One Italian in 25 is thus a student (probably disaffected) or an unemployed ex-student (certainly disaffected).

Before the war, the universities could accommodate 60,000 students. Very little new building has been undertaken while the student population has so massively increased. Rome, with 170,000 students, must be the largest university in the world and certainly one of the most chaotic.

A student pointed out during the disorders, as an example of what this lack of proper facilities means, that if the law faculty should be provided with the toilet arrangements necessary for the number of students enrolled in it, the whole available space in the existing faculty buildings would have to be given over to toilets.

The communists now appear, from the point of view of many students, to have compromised themselves by the conservative elements responsible for

that can be applied, they have lost the confidence, trust and even respect of the country, and have gone desperately and dangerously far towards depriving not just themselves but parliamentary democracy itself of those vital responses.

Beside that question, many others that at a different time would figure prominently cease to be worth discussing. Mr. Healey's assertion, during the last election, that the inflation rate was exactly half what it was, can wait, at any rate until he starts repeating it (it is sufficient comment on his financial stewardship that if there is now a general election and he wants to go about presenting the same fraudulent claim as he did last time it will be necessary for him to divide the truth by three, not two); likewise, we need not dwell upon Mr. Callaghan's frantic scurrying for support from the Liberals, from the Ulster Unionists, from anyone who can give it to him at any price (provided the price

can be kept secret, of course), which contrasts so uncharmingly with his scornful words about Mr. Heath's attempt in 1970 to come to just such an agreement with the Liberals; nor need we be long detained by the further revelations about the depth of political squalor reached under the Wilson administration, of which Mr. Callaghan and all his senior colleagues were such loyal and publicly admiring members (no doubt if there is an immediate election Mr. Callaghan will be fixing his own coordinating strategy with Mr. Powell); nor by such rancid mouthfuls as the cushy biller at Cable and Wireless found for Lord Glenamara of Glenridding ("Eless thee, Borrom! bless thee! Thou art translated!"); nor the degrading spectacle in last week's rigged non-vote in the House of Commons; nor the careful marching of the Stochford by-election to the Budget, and the Budget to the Stochford by-election.

There is a footnote, and a terrible one, to the already sufficiently terrible story I recounted last week of the East German family who tried to escape to freedom from that outpost of Soviet imperialism. The mother and son set off into the Baltic in one rubber dinghy, the father and two daughters in another. The two reached safety, the three were drowned. What I did not know when I wrote, but have since discovered, was what it was that finally impelled them to make

the attempt. It seems that the family had applied for permission to leave the country legally. It had been refused; the husband had been dismissed from his job with no chance of getting another; and the two girls were to be taken away and put in a state institution, in an act of further vengeance on their parents and them. It is not for us to say that the children and their father might have preferred drowning in search of freedom to staying alive in slavery; nor is it for us to say that they might not

Those items from the record become more footnotes. What is more remarkable is that the facing the country reduces even the gigantic failures and errors of policy to something not much more significant. This Government has managed, for instance, to wipe out the housing shortage entirely; to combine inflation and unemployment at levels that are almost without precedent separately and together; to institute a further programme of nationalization (and to promise even more) unwanted by anyone in the country outside a minority of a minority of a minority; to extinguish the right of Britain's citizens to refuse to be forced into a trade union against their will, and to give those who wish to force them every right short of physical violence to enable them to do so; to get through the House of Commons (though not the House of Lords) a Docks Bill that was opposed by almost exactly six-sevenths of the Cabinet and by a far greater proportion of the country; to raise taxation and foreign borrowing to heights not previously scaled by any government of any stripe; to pour into the ever-open mouth of such catastrophes as British Leyland uncountable sums of our money, and to present as a notable triumph a strike settlement the only result of which will be to enable the Government to pour and waste even more; and to do all this, and many more similar things, without deviating for a moment or by an inch from the public

and clamorous assertion that all is well.

If you want a bitter and symbolic example of that last claim, attend to Mr. Callaghan's comment on the unfavourable picture of Britain he found in the American press on his recent visit. The picture was false, he squeaked, presented by London correspondents who spent their time in bars. That is the man whose victory in the Labour Party leadership election, and appointment as Prime Minister, was greeted with such relief and hope by millions who, whatever their view of Mr. Callaghan, could and did at least comfort themselves with the reflection that he was not Harold Wilson; and it turns out that, after all, he is.

Deceit; incompetence; shabby excuses; that is the record. And yet, as I say, that record is not the chief ground for my hope that the Government will fall at 10 o'clock tomorrow night, nor my conviction that justice demands that it should. (Are there really not five Labour MPs—nor four, nor three, nor two—who will "speak for England" and help to turn out an administration that they know has failed so signally? I suppose not.) Nor is it any great surge of excitement at the prospect of a Conservative government under Mrs Thatcher, though I think she is very likely to prove worthy of public confidence. What finally decides the question for me goes deeper than any such considerations: and what I find when I go thus deeper, I shall explain tomorrow.

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Mr Carter, going all out for a better arms deal with Moscow

The Vladivostok accord on strategic arms limitation, agreed by President Ford and Mr. Brezhnev in 1974 was criticized at the time for not being ambitious enough. It had, said Dr. Kissinger grandly, put a cap on the arms race. The more sceptical felt that with each superpower allowed as many as 2,400 independent bombers and missiles—up to 1,320 of which could be fitted with multiple independent warheads (MIRV), the cap allowed rather too much room for growth. Now, however, Mr. Carter is preparing to stamp out the arms race and if he and the much-maligned Mr. Warnke can transform the tentative guidelines of Vladivostok into a new, permanent Salt-2 agreement this year, will be generally acknowledged that they have done rather well. Thus far have the signs been lowered and the horizons forestored.

Attempts to codify the Ford-Brezhnev totals have so far been frustrated by the failure of the superpowers to agree which missiles and bombers they should include. The most conspicuous obstacles have been the American long-range Cruise missile and the Russian Backfire bomber—which could reach the United States on a round-trip only if refuelled in mid-flight. President Carter's policy is to work for a swift, simple Salt-2 pact based on the Vladivostok framework, leaving these and other complications to be sorted out thereafter. The interim Salt-1 agreement on offensive missiles is due to expire in October and Mr. Carter is anxious to replace it with something more permanent before the time runs out.

He has also proposed a comprehensive nuclear test ban, prior notification of all missile launches and an agreement not to arm orbiting satellites or to shoot each other's satellites down—a reflection of American fears that the Russians are developing capabilities to do just that. The Carter Administration is in effect groping around for some point of contact where the two sides could do business.

A ban on nuclear tests?

This is a reasonably sensible approach, however much the Salt theologians may wink and nudge and look skywards in feigned disbelief over the man's ingenuity. After eight years during which the Salt talks have gradually lost momentum, the political need for a new agreement is even greater than the technological necessity. There is one snag, which is that the Russians have so far refused to let the Cruise missile be pushed to one side, and have objected with some justice to the American proposal of lumping it together with Backfire under the bland title of "grey areas." But State Department officials, now working overtime on the fine print of Mr. Vance's proposals are optimistic—if only for the quaint reason that all Washington seems to have enormous faith in their new political overlord. (In fact, the Russians tend to regard new faces with not so much exultation as suspicion.)

However successful Mr. Carter might be in seeking his October treaty, however, there is little ground for optimism after that. While the Geneva talks have creaked along in first gear, technology in both countries has gone roaring ahead. In fact, the Salt negotiations have encouraged technology rather than deterred it, but persuading either side to pile up bargaining chips—ready for bartering from position—strength over the green baize table.

Both superpowers have invested heavily in long-range missile submarines. The American Backfire is matched in a very general sense, by the American B-1 and now mobile land-based missiles are threatening to add a new dimension, with the Russian intermediate range SS-20 and the American Intercontinental MX. President Carter has



President Carter: groping round for a point of contact where the two sides could do business

deferred some spending on the B-1 and the MX, in the hope that real progress at Salt may make at least one of these grossly expensive systems unnecessary. Progress after they have been deployed will certainly be more difficult than it is at this stage, which is another good reason for action now.

How does one measure parity, particularly when the Soviet Union, partly for historic and partly for practical reasons, emphasizes numbers and size in designing its nuclear arsenal, while the United States places its faith in its technological superiority? Congressional critics are already sharply divided over Russian capabilities let alone their intentions. With the technology of Salt growing more sophisticated on both sides, a credibility gap could develop to such an extent that the administration might find Congress more sceptical than the Kremlin.

All this makes it desirable for the Salt talks to turn to qualitative restrictions, thus slowing the pace of weapons technology. This is an awesome task. The deployment of new missiles could be limited—so that the superpowers would not be able to play around with the numerical limits they are allowed. (The Vladivostok reference to MIRVed missiles is a step in this direction.)

How far the next session of Salt will be affected by the Senate's grudging confirmation of Mr. Warnke as negotiator-in-chief, or by President Carter's stand on Russian dissidents, is open to question. Probably they will be little harmed. Mr. Warnke must be aware of the need to remain immune to such pressures, and the Russians are unlikely to allow a letter to Mr. Sakharov stand in their way if they want a Salt agreement—just as they are unlikely to be seduced by fine words and kind deeds if they do not.

Britain has a particular reason for being interested in the progress of the Soviet-American discussions over Cruise missiles. Armed with an obsolescent Polaris system which will be in need of plastic padding and sticky tape by the end of the next decade, Britain will have to decide in about 1980 whether she wants a strategic weapon to replace it and if so—which one? The long-range Cruise missile could seem an attractive, relatively inexpensive alternative if the Americans felt able and willing to barter technology. But this is likely to be the least pressing of Mr. Carter's considerations.

Henry Stanhope
Defence Correspondent

Who is behind this new wave of student violence in Italy?

Rome

The communists are still deeply shocked by the sudden eruption of violence among students: high this time is aimed in particular against the Communist Party itself. It is as if the baying dogs leading the hunt suddenly forgot their function and turned round to bound the red-coated riders of left-wing orthodoxy, trotting imperiously behind them.

The student extremists struck first in the two places likely to cause the party most harm. The opening of this new campaign of violence—the first by students for nearly a decade—was at Rome University. The leading communist in the trade union movement, Signor Luciano Lama, was heckled and interrupted when he went to re-establish the old alliance between the student movement and the unions: he was forced to leave by a secondary exit and one of his first reported remarks was that what we had witnessed was the first act of "new fascism."

His discomfiture was followed by disorders in Bologna, the moral capital of Italian communism, the city with the reputation of being the best-administered in the country and much less plagued than other cities by problems of law and order.

The mayor, Signor Renato Zengheri, immediately detected a organizing hand behind the troubles. They were a response, he said, to the fact that the communists were coming closer to entering government: the object was to prove that they were incapable of governing. And on the following day, Rome was again the target with hours of fighting in the streets.

The violence is certainly connected with the emergence of the communist party as a government party. Their absences in Parliament and their collaboration with the minority Christian Democrat administration is crucial to the Government's survival. Shouts of "serenità" from students at the "day of communists" expresses his feeling as does the mystical aura that surrounds the student extremists that

the communists seek to provoke them so that the police can be brought into use against them. And the communists at first reacted in a way to lend credence to this theory by uttering exaggerated praises of the police and expression of the love the communists had always felt for them (when a few years ago the party openly regarded the police as the blunt instrument devised largely for use by the regime against anything looking a little red).

Politics apart, the students now have so great an accumulation of grievances that their comparative quietude since the great rebellion of 1967 and 1968 is surprising in itself. The communists may argue that the new violence is unexpected and politically inspired by forces anxious to destroy the idea that Italy is governable only with the cooperation of the communists.

The demands of the students in 1968 were for reforms. A Reform Bill (which many students dislike) is still, after nine years, winding its way through Parliament. There are about a million students in Italy and about another million graduates who cannot find work. One Italian in 25 is thus a student (probably disaffected) or an unemployed ex-student (certainly disaffected).

Before the war, the universities could accommodate 60,000 students. Very little new building has been undertaken while the student population has so massively increased. Rome, with 170,000 students, must be the largest university in the world and certainly one of the most chaotic.

A student pointed out during the disorders, as an example of what this lack of proper facilities means, that if the law faculty should be provided with the toilet arrangements necessary for the number of students enrolled in it, the whole available space in the existing faculty buildings would have to be given over to toilets.

The communists now appear, from the point of view of many students, to have compromised themselves by the conservative elements responsible for



this disastrous state of affairs. It is unfair on the party in the sense that the policy of co-operation with the government is extremely difficult to explain to young people, especially as the attempt at a deflationary policy, on which the communists are cooperating, will effectively cut public spending and chances of employment.

Violence is in a sense the political equivalent of inflation. It sweeps aside both constructive and dilatory policies because it is mindless and indiscriminate. Both these dangers have been pointed out repeatedly by the secretary of the Communist Party, Signor Enrico Berlinguer, who sees both economic disaster and violence as helpful only to the extreme right; and he has attempted to put young people—before this new outbreak—on their guard against extremism.

His sense of urgency is provided by a series of spectacles he has in his mind. The first is his realization that Italy's condition is much more serious than he thought it was last June when, after the general election, he agreed to help the Christian Democrats.

This is particularly true of the economic situation but it is now clear that his pragmatism is costing him far more than he expected in the strain he has had to place on his rank and file and, now, the serious signs of disaffection of young people.

He regards Italy's crisis as part of capitalism's situation but in a sense is the hearer of the problem of the International Monetary Fund's conditions for granting credits—Signor Berlinguer points out, to young people among others, that the collapse of western capitalism is worse than useless if it only brings in its train

the collapse of the civilization of the West.

He does not understand why anyone could disagree with his view of an impending danger of a new age of barbarism. This is why the violence, and its specifically anti-communist (even if left-wing) character is so disturbing to him.

This element also differentiates what is happening now from the students riots in 1968. Then, the protest was against the attitude of the consumer society as well as the lack of lecture-rooms while, at the same time, the rebellion had a strong vein of Catholic dissent. It is no coincidence that the 1968 revolt began in the most Catholic areas of Italy, in Trento, in Venice as well as at the Catholic University of Milan.

This time, the violence is wider and at the same time is aimed at destroying what for

the communists are basic tenets in the kind of society that for the communists are basic articles of faith in their advance along the "unexplored roads" which are supposed to lead to a better society; the alliance between students and workers sealed in 1968 and repudiated in Rome University when Signor Lama was refused a hearing; most fundamental of all, the right of the Communist Party, massive in its voting strength, to be the disciplined, responsible, unchanged voice of the left in Italy, the "dux ex Machina" which would put right the country's ills.

That essentially is why the attack of the pack of hounds on the left-wing riders is so much up their street, because it changes the prey and endangers the significance of the hunt itself.

Peter Nichols

The Times Diary

Kahn the prophet takes us to task

Since the Delphic oracles and probably before people who purport to peer into the future have been in great demand and held in high honour. Everyone wants to know what is going to happen. The fact that they can never be told with certainty, that any prediction contains a preponderance of guesswork, serves only to whet the appetite for prophecy and to reinforce the sophisticated paraphernalia and jargon which it surrounds the prophets.

So it is with Herman Kahn, who differs from the prophets of the ancient world only in the sophisticated paraphernalia and jargon which he employs. Yesterday, descending from his temple at the Hudson Institute in New York State, he was in London to convey his latest message to some 200 serious businessmen who had paid £60 a head to sit at his feet for the day.

His visit to this country has been celebrated in a manner appropriate to one who has so devoted a following—radio interviews and a profile in *The Times* yesterday. He looks the part—tall, round and bearded. His rapid, unclear mode of speech, which makes a proportion of his wisdom unintelligible, is also appropriate, for speaking in tongues has long been a trick of mystics. Many of the audience seemed to find that much even of what they could make out, especially the quickfire American jokes, was beyond their understanding.

Kahn's most popular current prophecy is that the world will continue to grow and to prosper, despite the apocalyptic threats of the neo-Malthusians that we are running out of resources. He has a 50-50 chance of being right—either we shall prosper or we shall not, not the real beauty of his prediction lies in the fact that if it is proved wrong it will not be then matter: it will be too late for his reputation to be affected.

He calls it his "post industrial" position, as against the "neo-Malthusian" philosophy of the anti-growth people. Like a revivalist preacher, he began by asking his listeners to declare their faith. Only 12 dared confess to being neo-Malthusians.

I last met Kahn some four years ago, when I interviewed him on the back seat of a large limousine as he was on his way to Heathrow Airport. Then his

institute had just written a report on France saying that it was the European nation of the future, as compared with Britain, which was in a dreadful mess. A year later a further report, this time about Britain, came to the same conclusion, and yesterday it was apparent that his view is unchanged.

"This was," he said, "a great country once. Once we recognized that we were not something and comfort was not something that which people were necessarily entitled. But 'the capacity of the British to be smug about approaching disaster five years ago was unequalled anywhere in the world.'"

Like many prophets, he was stern about personal standards of behaviour, particularly about sex. Here again, the British came badly out of a comparison with the Japanese and Koreans, whose businessmen are careful to dress in dark suits, with no excess of colour.

In these countries, a rigid line was drawn between business and private life. "That is characteristic of fast growth," he asserted. "You can't have fast growth without sacrifice." (Most of the audience were of the kind he approved. The few in brown suits I took to be civil servants or journalists.)

He gave us no respite. When the time came to break for morning coffee, he was horrified that half an hour had been allowed for the break. "English slovenliness," he complained.

"I'll adjust myself to it, although I don't like it."

The title of the conference was "The Next Ten Years—Images of the Future," and Kahn was sharing the platform with a home-grown southsayer, Enoch Powell. Though scheduled to speak in the afternoon, Powell turned up in the morning, dressed in a Japanese business suit and explaining that he was at present preoccupied with short-term political events over the next three days, rather than the next ten years.

Kahn said that he had heard Powell described as an English George Wallace, but educated, intelligent and a word which sounded like, but could not have been, deranged. Powell enjoyed the joke and proceeded to deliver a spirited talk, waving his arms at times of great excitement.

He agreed with much of what Kahn said and wrote, although he found it too optimistic. "Being an American, he can't help taking a favourable view of the Creator and of human creation. He underestimates our original sin." Powell used the occasion to ride some of his favourite hobby-horses—public expenditure as the cause of inflation; the mythology of the balance of payments; the death of Keynes. He was encouraged by the refusal of the House of Commons to rede some of its power to Welsh and Scottish assemblies.

Perhaps fortunately, Powell had not heard Kahn's earlier strictures about our slovenliness, and he concluded his look at the next ten years thus: "We are going to become more like ourselves again. We are going through a period of reversion to type." As if to prove that point, the chairman of the meeting announced that, since the morning session had over-run by 25 minutes, the afternoon session would start that much later, to avoid shortening the 90-minute lunch break. Kahn smiled wryly.

Our national indolence is well illustrated by a job advertisement in the *Times* last week, in which the duties of an advertised position included "attending quarterly meetings annually."

Fighting back

The tourist industry of the Republic, which has suffered in recent years because of the troubles in the north, is fighting hard to regain lost ground. The state tourist board has had its budget for the year increased by 16 per cent, and yesterday 100 Irish travel agents and travellers arrived in Britain for a two-week tour, at their own expense, to spread the word about Irish holidays. Tom Flannery, the Republic's minister of transport, power and tourism, gave a press conference at the Irish Em-

bassy, pointing out that tourism is his country's third largest industry. It hit rock bottom in 1972 with only 750,000 visitors from the United Kingdom.

Last year the figure climbed back to 785,000, but there are more things which would do Irish tourism more good than any amount of advertising: the legalization of duty-free allowances for British travellers. Fitzpatrick held out little hope of either in the near future.

Poetaster

William McGonagall, Britain's greatest bad poet, may soon be immortalized in his home for most of his life. To celebrate this year's centenary of his first poem, the city's Junior Chamber of Commerce plans to launch a public appeal to pay for a statue of the bard.

McGonagall himself described how he first burst into verse: "In the bright and balmy month of June 1877, he discovered that he was so strong he imagined a pen in his right hand and a voice crying 'Write! Write!'" And write he did—hundreds of verses, with rhymes of the most stupefying awfulness.

The only memorial in Dundee to the self-styled "poet and tragedian" is a seal, in the shape of a statue, of the Robert Burns McGonagall. The seal is a statue of the poet, and the seal is a statue of the poet, and the seal is a statue of the poet.



Infernal

The vexed question of "imply" and "infer" has aroused more interest among my readers than anything since my series on galoshes. I thought I had scored a complete victory last week when I quoted the mighty *Oxford English Dictionary* in support of my contention that

the two words are interchangeable.

But now readers have mustered to the opposing cause a combined weight of Fowler, Gowers, Webster, Peter Quennell and even the *OED Supplement*. The only way I can come close to winning this vote is to do a deal with the minor parties (the Concise and Shorter *Oxfords*), but I think I shall follow the example of my Government and simply decline to send my troops into the lobby at all.

Now, I suppose, some of my tetchiest readers (like the one who complained of my "tone of voice" and the other who quoted at me an old Finnish proverb: "Välä on valloittaa" (loudness?) will insist on pressing a motion of no confidence. Too late, because my administration has already declared its intention of throwing in the towel (sponge?) in May.

My reference to Lime Grove studios in my article on *Grace Wyndham Goldie* last week has inspired Sir Michael Balcon to tell me that when he was last in a part of the building was still reserved to or "the Polish corridor." This, he says, dates from the time when it was the Gaumont British film studio and he and his brother occupied opposite offices. It was called the Polish corridor because the Balcons were at one end.

PHS



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FALL OF THE NEHRU DYNASTY

Mrs Gandhi declared an emergency in India to save the country from chaos fomented by opposition parties and to give it instead firm discipline and stable government. She indignantly repudiated the charge that the maintenance of her own rule and her own leadership of the Congress Party was as strong a motive. Wherever the truth lay between national and personal ends, the first and most definite answer given by the election result is to Mrs Gandhi's future. Her rule, her leadership and her emergency have been rejected; her overwhelming defeat in her own constituency underlines the undeniable catastrophe.

This should end her eleven years in office as India's Prime Minister. It will be seen in India, surely, to end more than that. Save for Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri's brief intrusion, it will be seen as the end of a Nehru family dynasty that has ruled India for the thirty years since independence. The dynasty threatened to continue, as an outcome of the emergency, with the rise to power—while not holding any party or national political office—of Mr Sanjay Gandhi.

As his mother's close personal adviser his political activity led directly to disaffection among the Congress leadership. His harsh handling of such policies as family planning and slum clearance sparked angry demonstrations. When the election campaign began his performance was quickly found to be a liability and his privately drawn up list of young candidates to replace old Congress stalwarts was hurriedly scrapped. The old members were reinstated and may have suffered at the polls thereby. Mr Sanjay Gandhi, too, was overwhelmingly defeated by the electors of Uttar Pradesh.

A WARNING TO PRESIDENT GISCARD

There are two mistakes to be avoided in analysing the results of the French municipal elections. The first is to underestimate the success of the left. The second is to assume that that success makes next year's parliamentary elections a foregone conclusion. The success of the left is very difficult to summarize statistically, because of the lack of clearly comparable statistics. France uses a two-ballot electoral system. This means that each election produces two sets of statistics, neither of which is in itself a clear guide to the relative strengths of government and opposition.

There are also difficulties about comparing the results of municipal elections (where the degree of politicization obviously varies greatly from the big city to the small village) with those of cantonal elections (where only half the electorate votes at a time, but in constituencies of roughly uniform size), and equally with clearly political elections like those of the National Assembly and the President of the Republic. The last municipal elections, in 1971, are not really comparable either. They happened shortly before the Socialist Party began its spectacular recovery, under Mitterrand's leadership. In many parts of France at that time the Socialists were allied in local government not with the Communists but with "moderates" and centrists. The votes of left and right were thus far from being as clearly identifiable as they are today.

NEW CAMBRIDGE FALLACIES

Mr Wayne Godley and Mr Francis Cripps have set out in Monday's *The Times* and, with others, in the *Cambridge Economic Policy Review* a powerful, lucid and admirably explicit argument for a sharp change of economic strategy. They favour a massive budgetary stimulus to the economy combined with general import controls for an indefinite period of years.

They are both exceptionally talented economists of what we have called the "new Cambridge school". Those who disagree as completely as we do with their prescriptions have a duty to explain where we think the fallacies lie in their argument. The division of opinion rests on profound questions of economic theory and evidence, not on any merely practical or ephemeral judgments. We would not rest our disagreement on the fact that both the Cambridge propositions are explicitly ruled out by the terms of the Government's "letter of intent" to the International Monetary Fund. Nor would we rely just on the argument from the threat of retaliation against trade restrictions in a world which stands poised on the brink of a general, and ruinous outbreak of protectionism in western Europe and North America.

To reach the Godley-Cripps conclusions, three general premises are necessary: first, that the main source of Britain's secular proneness to rising unemployment and accelerating inflation is lack of competitiveness with overseas suppliers in home and export markets; secondly, that import controls can do something about this which devaluation cannot do;

Although she has deferred until today her decision to resign, it seems certain that Mrs Gandhi's political career is at an end and with it there ends the dynasty, one that served India well in its day, albeit tinged with autocracy and a certain aristocratic disdain for the common man. It is a dynasty that India may feel was due to end.

That conclusion would be coupled with the other obvious answer in this election: the positive preference for democracy. The opposition offered a straight electoral choice, one between dictatorship with Mrs Gandhi and political freedom with them, and to that there has been a straight answer. India sees no reason why its parliamentary system should be altered, still less why political leaders should be arbitrarily detained or the press censored. India wants no censors and fewer policemen.

The Janata coalition is relishing its probable victory. It is ahead of Congress and has a good prospect of an outright majority. But that does not end the importance of the Congress Party. It will remain the dominant party in India since no other with a national appeal is even in the making. It will thus be the most suitable machine for any aspirant to power. Unfortunately the election has thrown up no new leaders and has tarnished the reputation of some familiar ones. For has it marked any clear political trends: left and right are in any case misleading labels to use in India of any parties but those of the extreme left. Thus the balance of seats between Congress and the Janata Party is in doubt and neither has a leader who can easily command national support. Indian elections make slow progress with so many millions of

illiterate peasants. Normally not many more than half the electorate votes. The Congress vote has rarely gone above forty per cent of those voting. The interpretation of election results is further confused by the opportunism of elected members, many of whom are quite ready to desert their party and join the other side if office or some other attraction is strong enough. That process was going on during the campaign and may even continue today. The shape of any new government is thus still in doubt.

Unless Mrs Gandhi tries desperately to hang on to the leadership (she can do so for six months while she seeks election in another constituency) Congress is left with Mr Chavan as its most prominent survivor. The Janata coalition is scarcely better off. Mr J. P. Narayan endows it with the necessary hereditary of Mahatma Gandhi but he is old and seriously ill. Mr Morarji Desai may not be ill but he is over eighty. As for defectors from Congress, had it been asked which would fill the role of leader of a new India no one would have been less likely to be chosen than Mr Jagjivan Ram.

Parties, policies, leaders—all three are fluid. If there is a new Indian political outlook seeking expression there must be younger men to give it expression. That the election answers to some deep political feelings there can be no doubt. The result should ensure that emergency powers of the kind which have just been abandoned will not quickly mar or suspend India's political life and freedom again. In that sense it is an achievement. The task that now remains is to build a new government from the wreck of the old. It may not be easy.

election. It was generally presented by all parties as a dress rehearsal for the general election which is exactly a year away, and the turn-out was high. It is therefore very worrying for the government parties that the bogey of communism apparently failed to work. The majority of voters appear to have accepted the Communists as a necessary part of the Socialist-led opposition and are prepared to vote for either party. If the Prime Minister himself, Mr Raymond Barre, admits that the result "marks an undeniable success of the union of the left", who are we to deny it?

But it would be quite wrong to suppose that M Barre has given up hope of winning the general election, or that he would be right to do so. Many things can happen in a year. If M Barre's economic plan succeeds in holding inflation below ten per cent this year without provoking a serious increase in unemployment, the government could recover much of its prestige. Its supporters could also improve their chances if they manage to patch up their internal quarrels, to which the contest between M Chirac and M d'Ornano in Paris has given so much unedifying publicity. There is still time to convince the French floating voter that, whatever the virtues of socialists and communists in local government, to hand the whole country and its economy over to their management would involve an unacceptable degree of risk.

though in most cases less dramatically, in the other main western industrial countries where collective bargaining and "full employment" policies coexist.

The second Cambridge proposition—that import controls work better than devaluations—has been vigorously contested by Professor John Williamson, Mr Maurice Scott and others in *The Times* and elsewhere. We find their rebuttals convincing, but even if they were not, the point would not be material since the problem is internal, not external, as explained above.

The third Cambridge proposition is clearly at odds with the view that collective bargaining is essentially an exercise in maximizing monopoly profit in the labour market, even if some allowance is made for trade union reluctance to price too many of their own members out of jobs in the rare cases where that consequence is directly and immediately visible. The idea that collective bargaining would settle for their preconceived X per cent rise in pay, if it yielded their preconceived Y per cent increase in real earnings, quite irrespective of conditions in the labour market appears to fly in the face of both common sense and the historical evidence.

Economic theory and logic apart, the layman must ask himself whether it is really likely that an economy chronically afflicted by industrial inefficiency and by inflation will be resuscitated by sharp limitation of foreign competition and by massive doses of deficit spending financed from the printing presses. In this case too common sense is a sound guide.

BBC reporting of Northern Ireland

From the Chairman of the BBC Sir, The BBC's reporting of Northern Ireland has often been under fire, and especially so in the last few weeks, following our television interview with a man who claimed to have been maltreated by the RUC. The argument has turned both on the general role of the BBC in reporting about the Province, and on the particular programme.

I cannot describe our general stance better than in the terms used in your leader of March 16. The BBC "sees the duty of public service broadcasting (in Northern Ireland) as being to report and to reflect the conflict in all its manifestations. It sees both communities as part of its constituency, and to preserve its credit with both, it must not become the partisan of either."

This general philosophy has been set out in detail, with many illustrations drawn from experience, by our Controller in Northern Ireland, Mr Richard Francis, in a recent lecture at Chatham House. This stresses that we only send out as between democracies an undemocratic means—we do not give equal time to right and wrong, there never has been any question of that.

At their last meeting the Board of Governors, whose name I am writing, looked at the issues raised by their general policy, and at the criticisms made of the recent "Tonight" programme. They believe that the general philosophy, set out in the lecture by Mr Francis, is right, and the only sensible one for a free broadcasting organisation in a free country. On the other hand they recognised, as on so many occasions in the past, the difficulties that can arise in practice. However good the philosophy, it does not always indicate infallibly the right course of action in a difficult world.

Turning to the "Tonight" programme, the Governors were in no doubt about the scrupulous care with which the programme had been prepared, and they welcomed the sober and dignified introduction by Keith Kyle, setting out the appalling difficulties with which the RUC has to contend. But they were in no doubt that it would have been wrong to suppress the material, believed to be true by many citizens of Northern Ireland, and which the programme makers themselves could find no reason, after meticulous enquiry, to disbelieve. They also recognised that the allegations, if true, would be deeply disturbing, even if Mr O'Connor were proved to be associated with the IRA, and they would be doubly disturbing if he were shown not to be involved (in this connection it should be remembered that he was in fact released before the statutory period with no charge against him).

The Governors considered whether it was necessary to have pressed, as we must surely, he gave a statement of both. We might still reject the alternatives, but at least we should know, as would the public, what in reality it is that we are being asked to do. Yours faithfully, MICHAEL SWANN, Broadcasting House, W1. March 21.

Preserving our heritage

From Mr John Hannam, MP for Conservative, and Dr Donald Adamson

Sir, The Government's wish to preserve our national heritage as expressed in their Wealth Tax Green Paper is difficult to reconcile with their handling of the threat to the Rosebery collection at Menmore. Long bureaucratic delays and a serious lack of consultation with specialist bodies have made it less likely that the collection will be saved by help from any private source.

Whether or not the Menmore collection can still be preserved at this late stage, urgent consideration should now be given to improving the future response to such threats to the national heritage.

1. It is clear that much of the delay has been caused by the involvement of three separate government departments with Menmore. The national heritage must be made the responsibility of one minister who would be advised by interested parties, from owners of historic houses to art historians and museum specialists.

2. Recent ministerial statements have shown that the Land Fund no longer fulfils the aims of the original fund set up by Dr Hugh Dalton. If indeed it is now nothing more than a bookkeeping entry in the budget of the Department of the Environment, its effectiveness as a means of saving our national heritage has been undermined.

3. Efforts must be made to alleviate the fiscal burdens on our great collections. Among other things the government should consider extending the concessions on endowment funds (Finance Act 1976, section 84). For the cheapest and most

likely to elicit the truth. Nevertheless, they accepted that there was room for argument, both about the length and the style of the interview.

The Governors also considered at length the question of the timing of the programme—the issue to which you drew attention at the end of your leader. They noted that police inquiries in such cases were liable to take many months, and that on past showing, there was little likelihood of publication of the details of the allegations or rebuttals, unless the matter eventually came to court, in which case the delays would be much longer still.

Delays in the broadcast by a few weeks might, they thought, have been justified. But the risk attached to any longer delay would have been the accusation of suppression from one of the constituent communities in Northern Ireland—and it is such a charge that leads directly to loss of trust and credibility.

Your readers must judge for themselves, as we had to do, what balance should be struck between the minority community's trust in the BBC's fairness to them, on the one hand, and the need to ensure that the publication of the results of the enquiry at a time not easily calculated, but certainly distant. The Board believes that the right decision in principle was taken, but acknowledges, once again, that there is room for argument about how principle should be applied.

Returning to the wider issues, it should be beyond doubt that the BBC's impartiality is not as between right and wrong, but as between the two communities in Northern Ireland. It should be equally clear that the BBC has a responsibility to make available to the whole United Kingdom audience as complete and truthful a picture as it can of the state of affairs in Northern Ireland. It has to take account of what it may provoke in the Province or at Westminster, but equally this has to be weighed against fairness and honesty towards every side. The calculation is invariably difficult.

Nevertheless, the BBC welcomes the airing of these issues in public debate, and the Board of Governors has particularly appreciated the participation of the press in this latest phase of the argument.

So far we have seen no convincing indication of the practical alternatives that our critics would advocate, or of the arguments they would use to dispose of the obligations which you yourself have ascribed to us, and which we do our best to shoulder. If we are to be persuaded to recast our philosophy, we must, surely, be given a statement of both. We might still reject the alternatives, but at least we should know, as would the public, what in reality it is that we are being asked to do. Yours faithfully, MICHAEL SWANN, Broadcasting House, W1. March 21.

effective method of preserving our historic houses and their contents is to come to the aid of their owners who are fighting both inflation and the consequences of punitive taxation levels.

Unless the government make real concessions to owners of historic houses in return for public access, the break-up of private collections exemplified by the threat to Menmore will continue and this country will have lost most of its finest artistic heritage within a generation.

Yours truly, JOHN HANNAM, Chairman, Bow Group Arts Standing Committee, and Vice-Chairman, Conservative Party Arts and Heritage Committee. DONALD ADAMSON, Secretary, Bow Group Arts Standing Committee, 240 High Holborn, W1. March 17.

Mentmore

From Mr Peter Allen

Sir, In 1880, Henry James wrote to his mother from Menmore. "They are at afternoon tea downstairs in a vast, gorgeous hall, where an upper gallery looks down like the colonnade in Paul Veronese's pictures, and the chairs are all golden throne-like, belonging to the Doge of Venice. I have retired from the glittering scene, to meditate by my bedroom fire on the fleeting character of earthly possessions."

Yours faithfully, PETER ALLEN, 48 West Street, South Petherton, Somerset. March 17.

ducer of maize, and barley could be extended in Northern Germany. Both would reduce the dependence of the Community on the importation of soya bean meal as cattle feed, an important factor in the rising cost of beef.

The appropriate policy therefore is not to lock up technical progress but to restore balance to the Common Agricultural Policy. Land has alternative uses. Factory processing capacity is more specific, and here compensation should be paid to those forced to adjust to the new technology.

If affluence confers choice, poverty eliminates choice. Many poor countries depend on sugar for a significant part of their export earnings. It would be highly regrettable if the response of the European Community to the introduction of high fructose syrups is merely to dump more sugar on to the world market. This would be tantamount to shifting the burdens of adjustment on to those weak developing countries which have no obvious alternatives to sugar and are least able to adapt to the new technology. Yours faithfully, IAN SMITH, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Department of Economics, Newcastle upon Tyne, March 17.

EEC sugar policy

From Mr Ian Smith

Sir, Lords Jellicoe and Douglas of Barlock (March 16 and March 12) are on strong ground in condemning the proposal by the European Commission to impose a special levy on the production of high fructose glucose syrup. Technological advance in a new industry is likely to be rapid and of a cost-reducing nature. To deprive consumers of the benefits of technical progress in order to protect inefficient beet growers in Italy and Northern Germany is wholly to be deplored.

No doubt the Commission's proposal is prompted by the spectre of an impending sugar mountain. The development of high fructose glucose syrup is bound to be disruptive, not least because it will displace sugar in markets where consumption is stagnant or even declining. The problem is how to minimize the disruption created by the new technology.

The Community's sugar surplus is the result of an unrealistic pricing policy which makes the growing of sugar beet more profitable for large farmers than the raising of efficient crops. It could be eliminated by an appropriate change in the structure of agricultural prices. Italy is a relatively efficient pro-

Is this the time for an election?

From Mr J. E. Humphrey

Sir, In your first leader of today (March 19), "Parliament's Choice", in which you say that an election at this moment would need the justification of at least one of three specified conditions (which you proceed closely to argue), have you not overlooked the simple truth of the matter? For a political party (as for an individual) does there not come a time when, unless at last it stands up and fights against arrogant and contemptuous treatment, its self respect will go under?

Yours faithfully, J. E. HUMPHREY, 8 Offington Gardens, Worthing, Sussex. March 19.

From Mr T. C. Skeffington-Lodge

Sir, Reading, as it were, between the lines, I gather from your leader this morning (March 19) that you are not in favour of an early General Election. I think you accurately reflect public opinion in adopting this attitude.

While there is unquestionably pretty widespread disappointment that our economic difficulties still remain largely unsolved, and the Government of the day, no I think, unfairly, gets the blame for this, there is a growing belief that despite its defects, it is the best available instrument for overcoming them.

Improving prospects have undoubtedly led an unconstructive and not by any means united Opposition to press for an early election which following a Tory victory would enable Mrs Thatcher to benefit from the good results of the unpopular ground work Mr Callaghan and his colleagues are undertaking in the national interest—as they see it. What the electors would have to consider most carefully, if the Government is to be re-elected, Wednesday, is whether a right wing Tory Administration could, after its election, command enough backing to win through to the success for the country which I for one believe lies ahead of its present direction. It is because I think that the current grave industrial and international problems we face would be harder to solve under an about-turn Thatcher Government, and that at home industrial strife would so greatly grow as probably to be insoluble, even if dealt with by some form of draconian legislation, that I hope, as do many others, that a "down to earth" and "facing the facts" Mr Callaghan will continue as Prime Minister, backed as he is by a team which is increasingly

proving itself the only one in existing circumstances likely to see us through to the better times which lie nearer ahead of us than our all too many gloom prophets predict. I am, Sir, Your obedient servant, T. C. SKEFFINGTON-LODGE, 5 Powis Grove, Brighton, March 19.

From Mr Anthony Holland

Sir, It is widely assumed that the Government will resign if defeated in the forthcoming debate. But will they? With their often repeated contempt for the rules and traditions of Parliament, I can envisage a situation by which they could be defeated on Wednesday by one vote and then hang on until the result of the Stretford-by-election is known on Friday. On the assumption they hold this seat, they may then seek to reverse the vote—the following week with the automatic support of the Speaker's casting vote.

Therefore, I hope that during the debate the Opposition will press for a categorical statement of the Government's intentions before the vote is taken. Yours faithfully, ANTHONY HOLLAND, Windlesham Manor, Windlesham, Surrey. March 19.

From Mr R. H. McCall

Sir, Nor all will support the Prime Minister's description of the Opposition as "a bunch of faded daffodils". Indeed some of us have our own biological names for most political parties. But would it not be wise for the Leader of the Opposition to ponder on Kipling's lines:

"This season's daffodil—she never bears—
What chill—what chance—cut down last year's.
But with countenance divine and knowledge small
Esteems her continuance to be perpetual."

I do not for one moment believe that Mrs Thatcher lacks knowledge! But "countenance divine"? Might she not catch a chill?

Indeed might we all quite easily catch a chill in an early election? And I join Mr Whitelaw, Mr Maudling, etc. as "faded daffodils"! Yours faithfully, ROBIN MCCALL, The Hospice, St Giles Hill, Winchester. March 19.

Cannabis law reform

From Mr David Dimler

Sir, Ronald Butt (*The Times*, March 17), argues that eight years after the Wootton Report we should be "profoundly grateful" to Mr Callaghan for his blunt opposition to cannabis law reform, and whilst "it cannot be proved categorically" that his decision was responsible for our escaping the "daughters of cannabis" there is supposed to be good analogical evidence for this in the rotten fruits borne by the 1967 Abortion Act and changes in the pornography laws.

May we point out that the cannabis laws have in fact had no appreciable deterrent effect. In 1968 the Wootton Committee guessed there might be between 30,000 and 300,000 people who had tried cannabis. Five years later a BBC survey estimated that the figure was 3,812,700. Whatever the real number is, it is clear that use of cannabis is no longer restricted to any particular class, race or age group, and that it has indeed become a widespread cultural equivalent of alcohol for a large number of people regardless of the law's "moral" posture.

The real effect of the law has been the criminalization and con-

sequent embitterment of those people, mainly young, unemployed, inner city dwellers, against whom the law is selectively enforced. Arbitrary justice is the most harmful consequence attendant on the use of cannabis.

The appalling lack of responsibility which characterizes much press reporting on the subject of cannabis is perfectly illustrated by the publication in *The Times* of such erroneous propositions as "There is now knowledge that did not exist with certainty in 1969 that cannabis is addictive, and creates physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms", based upon a report from a book not yet publicly released and subjected to scientific criticism.

Our cannabis laws are now among the most repressive in the "civilized" world. Perhaps a singularly ineffective tool for controlling popular and harmless pursuits. The open wound which the "drug problem" has been to society at large would dry up and heal if the blunt instrument of the criminal law were withdrawn from this area of private behaviour.

Yours sincerely, D. DIMLER, Research Officer, for Release, 1 Elgin Avenue, W9.

Seal culling

From Mr J. K. Hiller

Sir, A regular sign of spring in recent years has been the publication of photographs of baby harp seals on the ice off Newfoundland, and the sight of a harp seal being killed. May I, as a resident of Newfoundland, offer a few observations?

The opponents of the seal hunt stress two main points. First, that the harp seal is an endangered species and second, that the hunt is in some way morally reprehensible since it is for pelts rather than for meat. The first contention is debatable, since the quota established by the Canadian federal government is designed to ensure the survival of the species without its being so numerous as to damage the cod and other fisheries, but there is no doubt room for argument as to what that quota should be.

The second contention is, however, dubious in the extreme. Seals are not the only animals hunted for their pelts, and one would have far more respect for the protesters were they equally concerned with the beaver or the fox. One can only conclude that because the baby

harp is peculiarly appealing, and the method of killing apparently brutal—though surely no more so than trapping—it has attracted a disproportionate amount of attention.

The seal hunt is of economic importance to a fairly small percentage of Newfoundlanders these days, but it has a deep cultural importance. Newfoundlanders have been hunting seals for nearly 200 years; the annual hunt marked the end of winter inactivity, becoming a necessary rite de passage for all young men, and part of the fabric of traditional island life.

The opposition of Newfoundlanders to the conservationists does not derive from a desire to harry the seals to extinction, but from a wish to preserve the remnants of an important tradition which indicates that the outpost Newfoundlanders—himself an endangered species—still exists. Were the protesters to campaign for the preservation of the increasingly rare cod as well as the seal, they might find the fishermen supporting them, for then the cod does not whimper, and photographs badly.

Yours faithfully, J. K. HILLER, 12 Prince Albert Road, NW1.

Exit the cream cracker

From Mrs Michael Devas

Sir, This correspondence reminds me of the lady in Sussex who, not long after the Trade Descriptions Act was passed, went around her village indignantly showing the reply she had had from a well known firm of confectioners in answer to her complaint that there had been no cream in one of their cheesecakes she had purchased. The manufacturer's reply ran as follows: "Madam: there is no cream in a cheesecake. Would you expect to find a fairy in a fairy cake, or a rock in a rock cake?" I beg to remain, Sir, Your obedient servant, CATHERINE DEVAS, Stamford House, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire.

From Mr J. V. Matthews

Sir, It is a great pity that the food manufacturers are opposing EEC draft regulations on the dairy con-

tent of ice cream. By doing so they are depriving the British consumer of an opportunity to taste the real thing, but they are probably depriving themselves of a greatly enlarged market as well.

For once the British consumer learns what real ice cream tastes like—as opposed to the vegetable oil sludge marketed under the name in this country—consumption might rise to the levels of other countries. How else would they explain the great success of the American ice cream shops recently opened in London?

Yours sincerely, J. V. MATTHEWS, Park View Road, Woldingham, Surrey.

From Mr Alan John Meadowcroft

Sir, Cream crackers are now to be called simply "crackers", after the Common Market Commission. Yours sincerely, ALAN J. MEADOWCROFT, 49 Verney Road, Royton, Oldham.

Shopping/Philippa Toomey

Something special to hang on the wall

Last year the most important thing in my life was not the American Bicentennial or the resignation of Harold Wilson, but the fact that, at last, I learned how to wallpaper. From *The Reader's Digest Book of How to Cope with Virtually Any Emergency Apart from a Nuclear Holocaust* it didn't look all that simple. What you really need is a kind and patient friend with a straight eye, which I had, who also lent me his paste table. The next thing is to choose your wallpaper.

The question of why people make one choice rather than another is a perpetual mystery to me. I have always preferred plain strong colours, and I have ended up with pale blue and brown shades in my bedroom, influenced partly by the fact that I was given a bed by another kind and patient friend, which had a dark brown bed-head, and partly because I fell in love with a wallpaper, disarmingly called "Tweet" (£3.09 a roll) in Sanderson's Chintz range.

This has a faintly Brighton Pavilion air of birds and trellises—two birds looking in opposite directions, which were hell to match. "Safari", another Chintz pattern, had even bigger birds and flowers, a huge, gorgeous, romantic paper with four background colours, of which I liked the scarlet and the black best, if you could find a room to do the pattern justice, at £3.48 a roll, with matching fabric, at £4 a metre. Shown here is "Keppell" (why Keppell? one asks, humming feverishly in the catalogue for Wilson and Betty) in four colourways, of which the prettiest is all blue shades, and the one shown is in blues, pinks and beiges at £2.83 a roll.

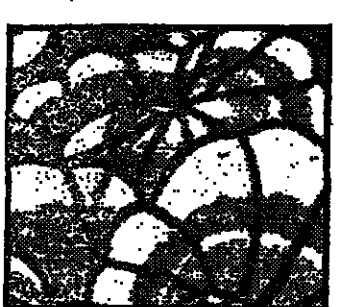
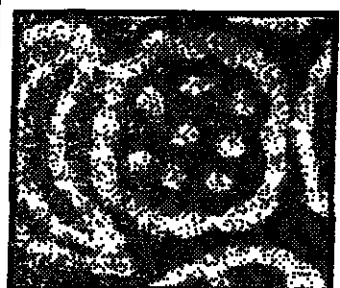
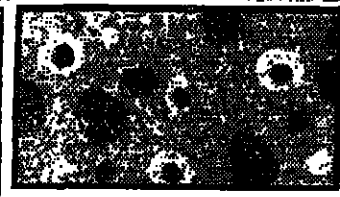
For those who sit in front of pattern books for hours gazing hopelessly at page after page,

or wander through acres of furnishing fabric departments, unable to make the fatal choice, Colour Counsellors and their Black Boxes would be a help. This is a service run by Shirley Liger and Virginia Stourton to bring the best and brightest to you in your own home. Each of the eight boxes contains a selection of carpet, fabric, wall-coverings in one of eight colour schemes.

Colour Counsellors will call on you to offer advice, design a scheme, arrange for a full making up service, if you wish. If, on the other hand, your wish is to brood alone, on a Black Box, the rental charge is £10 a day (maximum period three days—if you can't make your mind up by then you never will) waived on orders of £50 or over. Some of the fabrics are specially designed by Shirley Liger, and I particularly liked two matching fabrics in bright green on natural, called Harlequin Green and Harlequin Trellis Green, £3.30 a metre, 50in wide. There are also some very pretty sheer fabrics, which need to be seen to be appreciated properly. Inquiries to Colour Counsellors at their showroom, 187 New Kings Road, London SW6 (01-736 8326).

Plunging down into the faintly ecclesiastic undercroft (it seems a more appropriate word than basement) of Watts and Co, led to a revelation. They are a leading Church furnisher, but also have a marvellous collection of Victorian designs for wallpaper and fabric, which are still printed by hand from the original carved pear wood blocks. Shown here is the Pugin Pineapple, which I saw in dark yellow printed on pale yellow, to devastating effect.

The Pugin Rose and Coronet—sprigs of red roses, with green leaves, surmounted by a coronet, were delightfully fresh and pretty, and both designs could go well in modern as well as Victorian rooms. The Sunflower design can be seen on the walls of Keats's House



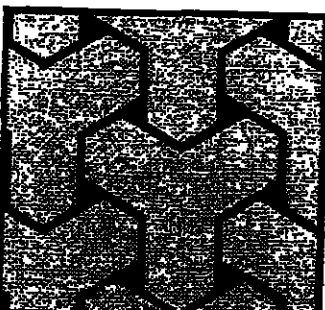
Three fabric designs by Kaffe Fassett for Designers Guild. Top to bottom: Pebbles, £6.50. Fossil, £5.50. Late Leaf, £7.50 per metre.



Osborne and Little's Foil paper, above, and from the Hanging Garden range, below.



Sanderson's Keppell, above, and Osborne & Little's hessian, below.



Osborne and Little's frieze, above, and Pugin's Pineapple below.



in Hampstead, and the Pineapple in the House of Commons. As everything is printed to order, no stock is kept, and you may have any colour you wish. I loved the Pugin Trellis in dark, soft red on a pinky red background, and the paper can be moiré or jaspé—or even both, rather like dancing the waltz and the rumba at the same time. Prices are being revised (upwards, alas) but they start at £13.45 a roll plus VAT, with a minimum order of 10 rolls, from Messrs Watts and Co, Ltd, 7 Tufon Street, London SW1P 3QB (01-222 7169).

Osborne and Little are in

complete contrast—everything is new, modern, bright, sparkling, with numbers for the papers rather than names. I have always hesitated about putting a very large design up on my walls, but I was very struck by the notion of huge navy blue and white pelicans (£12.50 plus VAT) and have seen a very complicated bird, trellis and butterfly design shown to great advantage in a small country cottage. Shown here is 255A in the Hanging Garden range, stylized red poppies with green leaves on a curly coloured background (a fairly mild curry) at £5.20 plus VAT a roll, printed hessian in

a strong, almost Islamic design, brown on cream, or navy blue on cream, £3.75 a metre plus VAT, 100cms wide (PH 200), and one of their silver foil designs, 104B, two shades of green for trellis and leaves, bright pink flowers on silver, £11 a roll plus VAT. They had a very exciting foil paper of silver and black tigers leaping out at you, but I thought, on the whole, it would be hard to find a room to suit them. Also shown is one example of many designs of frieze—gold on white, 60A, 25p plus VAT a yard. Friezes vary from 3in deep to 30in and would give a whole new look to a wall in good con-

dition which has begun to bore you. Inquiries from Osborne and Little, 304 King's Road, SW3 (01-352 1456).

"Are you quite happy looking round?" inquired one of the assistants at Designers Guild, just across the road from Osborne and Little. I most certainly was—it is one of the prettiest shops in London, full of design ideas and with a co-ordination of pattern and colour which gives great pleasure. Shown here are some of the designs for new fabrics from Kaffe Fassett for Tricia Guild, in four sets of subtle colourings—my favourite is in shades of greys, blues and browns. Prices

range from £6.60 to £7.50 a metre for the fabrics, and there is coordinating wallpaper for all the designs at £4 a roll. Designers Guild fabrics may be obtained at a number of places throughout the country, so inquiries to Designers Guild, 277 King's Road, London, SW3 SEN (01-351 1271).

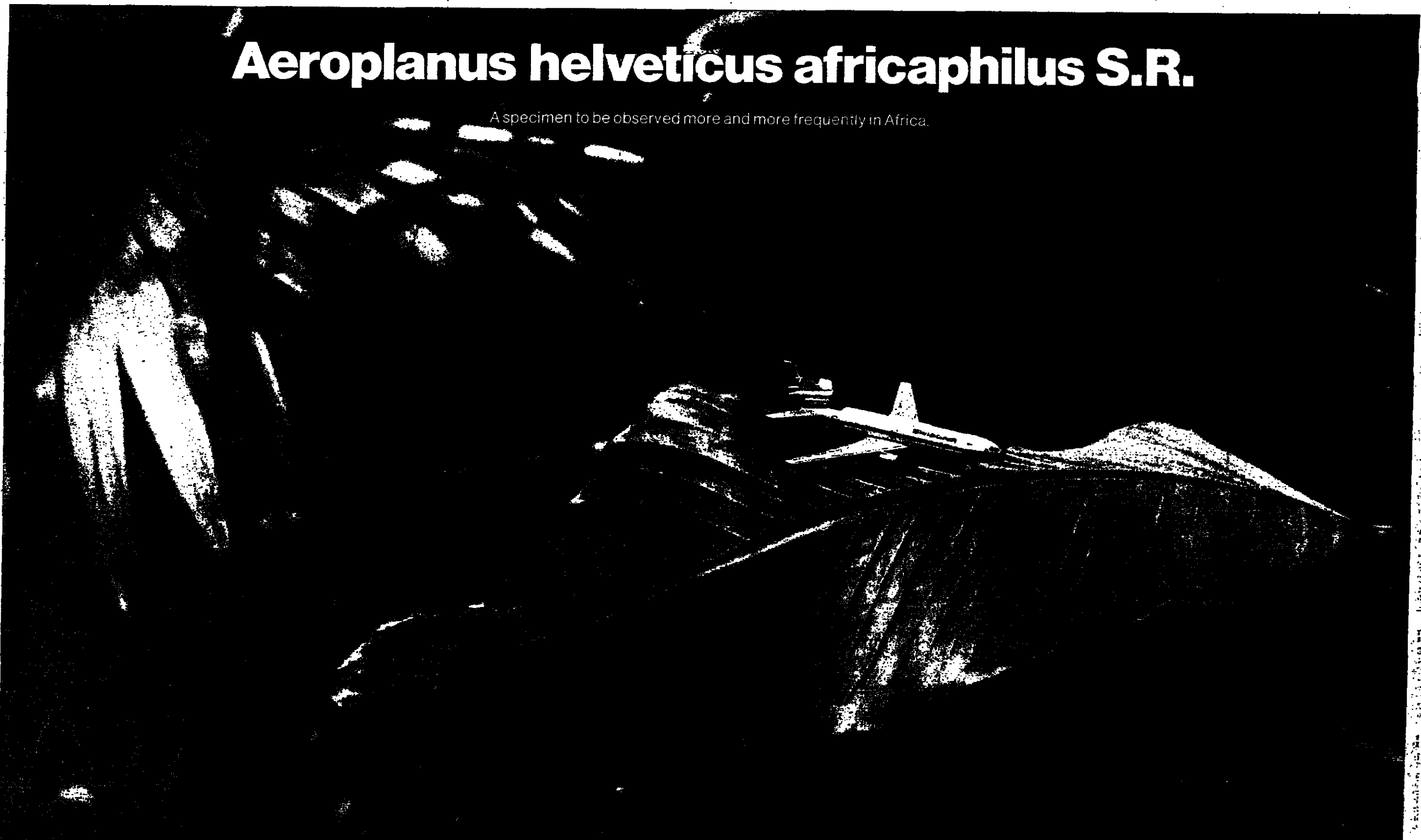
Jane Galloway has come up with the charming idea of making small picture frames in fabric—and Designers Guild fabrics would be ideal for this. The smallest is 10 by 10cms, and it needs 0.20 of a metre of fabric, and costs 95p, and the frames range through triple, double, standing or hanging,

square or oval, up to the largest (an oval standing frame) which is 28 by 22cms, 0.35 of fabric at £3.25. For price list and details send stamped addressed envelope to Jane Galloway, Damer Design, Dorset Group, Milton Abbas, Dorset DT11 0BW (025 888 327).

My next problem is papering a ceiling, which I am assured is not only fiendishly difficult, the blood runs out of your arms, you fall off ladders into the paste bucket, you can't manage on your own, and it is the cause of many an irreparable rift between kith and kin. Who loves ya? When papering a ceiling, NOBODY.

Aeroplanus helveticus africaphilus S.R.

A specimen to be observed more and more frequently in Africa.



The *Aeroplanus helveticus africaphilus* S.R., which even the layman can easily recognize by its silvery wings and handsome red stripes, has been little noticed hitherto in classical entomology. Quite unjustly. The *Africaphilus* S.R. (the letters denote its discoverer, Swissair)

is definitely a useful insect, species of which include the DC-8, DC-9, and DC-10.

Considering its low emission level and quiet movements, it is probably the most useful insect ever to land in Africa. This is apparent particularly from the

infallible instinct with which it flies tirelessly from Switzerland to Abidjan, Accra, Algiers, Cairo, Casablanca, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Douala, Johannesburg, Khartoum, Kinshasa, Lagos, Libreville, Monrovia, Nairobi, Oran, Tripoli, and Tunis.

Your travel agent or Swissair will gladly give you further information. For instance about the best connecting flights from London and Manchester via Switzerland.

SWISSAIR

Account Days : Dealings Began, March 14. Dealings End, March 25. \$ Contango Day, March 28. Settlement Day, April 5.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

مكتبة من الأعمال



Near standstill in earnings widens gap between pay and prices

By David Blake

Economics Correspondent

Average earnings were virtually static in January widening the gap between pay and prices but increasing the chances that the Government's target for the present policy will be observed. During the first six months of the policy earnings increased by 5.5 per cent compared with an expected increase of 7 per cent for the year as a whole.

However, only 0.1 per cent of this increase occurred during January, lending some credibility to the view in Whitehall that there was great bracing of earnings in the second half of 1976.

But the pay policy will clearly come under heavy strain during the coming months. If its targets are to be met, average earnings can increase only by about 1.1 per cent between the beginning of February and the end of July, at a time when prices will still be rising quickly.

Because of this, there is the possibility of some slippage, as occurred during the last round of pay restraint. It is also likely that pressure for big increases in money incomes during the next round of pay negotiations will be mounting in the next few months unless increases in real earnings through tax cuts reduce the pressure on living standards.

There have already been quite substantial falls in real earnings. At the end of January earnings were 11.8 per cent up on a year previously, while prices had risen 16.5 per cent during the same period.

The gap would have been largest due to the increase in the amount of overtime, which has been rising steadily since February, 1976, and which is believed to account for between 1 and 2 of a percentage point of the 11.8 per cent increase.

Extra overtime partly explains why earnings are rising at a fairly rapid rate compared to the predictions made at the time the present policy was agreed. There is no sign of

WAGES

The following are the index numbers for basic rates of wages for all manual workers in all industries and services and for average earnings of all employees in all industries and services covered by the monthly earnings inquiry released by the Department of Employment.

	(1) Hourly rate (July 31 1972 = 100)	(2) Average earnings (Jan 1970 = 100)	% Change in (2) over 5 months at annual rate
1976			
March	206.4	250.0	15.9
April	207.9	254.4	16.8
May	210.1	255.0	11.2
June	211.7	259.6	16.3
July	216.5	261.2	11.1
August	218.0	263.1	13.3
September	219.2	267.2	12.2
October	218.5	268.1	12.0
Nov	220.7	272.2	7.7
Dec	221.5	277.1	17.9
1977			
Jan p	223.8	277.5	13.3
Feb p	223.9	n/a	n/a

revised p provisional

any agreement in breach of its guidelines.

About five million workers are estimated to have settled within the terms of stage two. Basic wage rate figures issued by the Department of Employment show a rise of less than 0.1 per cent during February, and both hourly and weekly rates are only 8.5 per cent above their level of a year ago.

Basic rates are a much poorer guide to how earnings are moving than the average earnings index itself. Thus, although the basic-rate figure is more recent it gives little indication of whether the slowdown indicated by the January figure has been maintained.

This is because when pay policies fail to hold they usually break down at local or plant level away from the gaze of those who agreed the national deal.

Midland Bank bows to profit sharing call

By Christopher Thomas

Union pressure on the Midland Bank appears to have succeeded in winning a commitment for a profit sharing scheme. Details of the bank's offer are being released and should be in union hands tomorrow.

Profit sharing schemes are already operating at Barclay's, National Westminster and Williams and Glyn's, Midland, which in 1976 more than doubled its profits over 1975 to £166m, said yesterday that it proposed to introduce profit sharing to 43,000 staff when pay policy permitted.

The National Union of Bank Employees' latest journal says that detailed discussions on the proposals will take place in the near future. "It will be the union's intention to do everything possible to get the scheme implemented without delay."

It continues: "However, we recognize that there may be some difficulty in implementing the scheme under the present phase of the social contract. If it is not possible under this phase the union will be pressing for sufficient flexibility in the next phase..."

The bank said yesterday that its offer would be put to NUBE and the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS), which share bargaining rights in Midland. It has faced the possibility of a challenge under the contentions Schedule 11 of the Employment Protection Act, which aims to give equal pay conditions between similar employees in the same locality.

Gold rises \$2 to 18-month peak

The price of gold rose on the European bullion markets to its highest level for 18 months. Having breached the \$150 an ounce barrier on Friday, the metal encountered fresh buying interest yesterday. It closed in London last night at \$151.875 an ounce, with a net rise on the day of \$2 (it slipped back under \$150 on Friday).

Dealers reported a firm market in the Far East, contributing to a strong opening price in Europe.

Threats of general election and national dock strike upset markets Shares suffer worst day for 5 weeks

By David Mott

Prospects of defeat for the Government in tomorrow night's vote and the threat of a national dock strike sent shares tumbling on the London stock market yesterday.

Over what was the worst day for five weeks the FT 30-share index lost 14.1 to close at 414.4. According to a Data-Stream calculation £1,365m was wiped off the market's capitalization.

Although a little firmer than equities, some gilt-edged stocks were £1 lower at one stage. Equity dealers said that the selling was not heavy and largely "professional", but it was widespread and few sectors escaped double-figure losses. In the hour after lunch scattered "bargain hunting" and news that a leading firm of book-makers had shortened its odds on a Government victory in a brief rally. But it was short-lived and most shares closed at the bottom.

In the gilt-edged market most

of the selling was concentrated at the short end of the range. By lunchtime many stocks had lost three quarters in "fairly heavy" selling and by the end of trading were a full point lower.

Selling among the long dates was much lighter but there were still losses of up to £1 by the middle of the session. There was, however, a good rally after lunch and, by the close, earlier falls had been halved. The aspect of the call for a vote of no confidence in the Government is the uncertainty which it creates, even assuming that the Government comes through unscathed.

For some time now many market men have been unhappy with the precariousness of the Government's voting position and many feel that sentiment from will live increasingly under the shadow of a general election.

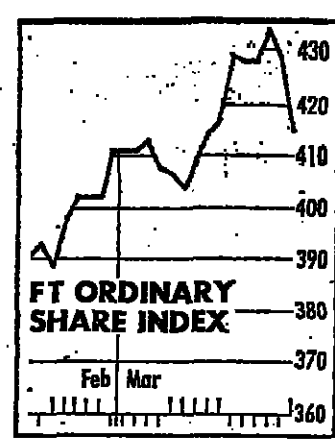
Though the City naturally inclines towards a Conservative

Government, a majority of market men would not welcome the prospect of an election at this stage of the country's economic recovery. The particular point of concern is the attitude of the trade unions would adopt, especially on the continuation of an incomes policy.

Industrial leaders were among the hardest hit yesterday with losses which ran into double figures. Even shares with a strong overseas interest went into reverse with all thoughts of dividend restraint temporarily forgotten.

Starting too came under pressure and there was some early selling on the foreign exchanges yesterday. The Bank of England is believed to have provided some support for the currency. However, as the trading session progressed, good commercial demand for sterling reversed the earlier fall.

The Bank was then believed to have intervened to prevent it rising too far, and according to



FT ORDINARY SHARE INDEX
Feb Mar

dealers, "more than recouped the dollars that had earlier been spent in support operations."

The rate against the dollar closed finally at \$1.7177, with a net gain on the day of 5 points, having at one stage dropped to \$1.7145.

Financial Editor, page 23

Lord Ryder is taking a hand in Big Ben

The National Enterprise Board has taken its founders' dream of securing the commanding heights of the economy at face value. Lord Ryder and his board yesterday announced the proposed acquisition of a 90 per cent shareholding in the turret clock-makers, Thwaites and Reed.

Besides looking after Big Ben, the Sussex-based concern has installed about 300 clocks in town halls, church towers and in famous buildings, ranging from Portmarn and Mason in Piccadilly to the City timepiece over the front of the Financial Times building, Bracken House.

By the subscription of £240,000 in new £1 ordinary shares, equal to 90 per cent of the equity, the taxpayer-funded NEB becomes controller of the existing tower clock-makers in Britain and holder of the Royal Warrant as Turret Clockmakers to Her Majesty the Queen.

Since last August, Thwaites and Reed has been busy putting Big Ben right. The most famous clock in the world stopped on August 5, 1976, the day when the Government was asked about an NEB investment in Turret clocks, the office machine makers.

Little did MPs below realize that, under the cover of the company's contract to clean, wind and maintain Parliament's symbolic clock, contacts were being made with Lord Ryder and merchant bankers in a search for working capital.

From a selection of presentations, the NEB offered the best package of help, at the price of virtual nationalization and a seat on the family board, to Mr Geoffrey Buggies, the chairman and managing director.

The Buggies family became associated with Thwaites and Reed 121 years ago, but the company goes way back to 1740, when Mr Aynsworth Thwaites made the Horse Guards Parade clock, still in use.

With about 30 employees, the company says it needs money for expansion, building up marketing overseas in such places as Germany, Japan, the United States and even Switzerland.

Turret clocks are not the only product, for there is a piece line in domestic bracket timepieces and ships' chronometers as well as conventional products.

For its part, the NEB commented yesterday (at about 1402 hours): "We are very pleased to be associated with this historic and internationally renowned company which we believe, because of this injection of capital, will be able to expand its range of products, use to the full its export potential, and show a good return on investment."

Criteria which might equally apply to that other NEB subsidiary, British Leyland, where the gates opened yesterday and mail for the returning work force for the returning work force.

MAURICE CORINA

CBI remedy for Britain's recovery

By Malcolm Brown

The lesson of the recent discussions with the International Monetary Fund was that we had now reached a level at which we either put our own economic and industrial house in order or our creditors would do it for us, Lord Watkinson, president of the Confederation of British Industry said yesterday.

Speaking at the Kingston Regional Management Centre, New Malden in Surrey, Lord Watkinson gave a warning that even North Sea oil would not save us from having to make this decision.

"It is very much a management decision. It is like a board that takes over a near bankrupt business and decides what management policies must be applied to get the company right."

At present, said the CBI president, we were delivering about 75 per cent of our national horsepower. "Raise that to 95 per cent and most of our problems would be solved."

Lord Watkinson said that the confederation's proposals for fostering recovery had been made known, including provision for getting inflation down to around 5 per cent by mid-1978, doubling real profits to pay for investment and cutting taxes to restore incentives.

However, it was essential to make sure that as this kind of programme gathered speed it was not wrecked by ill-judged actions such as insistence on the Bullock proposals on industrial democracy and attacks on free enterprise and the profit motive.

Clash over union team delays Leyland talks

By Clifford Webb

negotiations on the Leyland Cars toolroom workers dispute were still in the balance last night after more than eight hours of talks in a Birmingham hotel.

The chief stumbling block was the composition of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' team to be chosen to deal with management.

This became clear as the three Leyland executives present—Mr Richard Perry, director of manufacturing, Mr Geoffrey Whalen, personnel director, and Mr Bill McLean, director of employee relations—spent most of the day waiting for another part of the hotel while union leaders tried to come to terms with the toolroom strike committee led by Mr Roy Fraser.

Mr Terry Duffin and Mr Bill John, both national executive members were sticking to the official union line that the negotiating committee must represent all sections of the membership although this could include representatives of the toolroom strike committee.

On the day that Leyland recalled more than 40,000 workers, the company's Joint Management Council, which is composed equally of management and union representatives, issued a warning to all 120,000 employees about the consequences of further breaks in production.

In a letter the council said: "There has been much speculation recently about the likelihood of plant closures and the loss of thousands of jobs. Let

no one doubt that it can happen. The overriding task now facing everyone employed by Leyland Cars is to prevent a drastic cut-back in our operations."

The letter said the Government and the National Enterprise Board had made it clear that three objectives had to be met: 1. Normal working conditions by the end of March; 2. Stay or work and achieve production and productivity targets; 3. Take joint steps to improve radically industrial relations.

Failure to achieve these three objectives would lead to massive job losses throughout the group, the letter said.

Components men laid off: A Staffordshire company making components for the motor industry yesterday laid off more than 1,000 workers and 545 more on a three-day week as a result of the Leyland troubles.

Risks Wires and Cables of Newcastle-under-Lyme has lost orders because of the British Leyland dispute. A spokesman said the company's work would continue until British Leyland returned to normal working and orders began to channel through.

Orders for Germany

Against all expectations the flow of new orders to West German industry appears to have fallen sharply in the first few weeks of this year after a strong rise in December. The Economics Ministry reported yesterday that the index for new orders fell by a provisional six per cent in January to 152 from December's lowest level since June.

The Times index: 170.43—4.51
The FT index: 414.4—14.1

THE POUND

	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	1.52	1.57
Austria Sch	30.25	28.25
Belgium Fr	65.00	62.00
Canada \$	1.85	1.80
Denmark Kr	16.05	15.95
Finland Mk	5.75	5.50
France Fr	8.77	8.45
Germany Dm	4.26	4.04
Greece Dr	63.75	61.75
Hong Kong \$	10.00	9.75
Italy Lr	1545.00	1490.00
Japan Yn	505.00	490.00
Netherlands Gld	4.44	4.22
Norway Kr	9.26	8.90
Portugal Esc	68.00	64.00
S Africa Rd	1.54	1.51
Spain Pes	121.75	113.25
Sweden Kr	7.50	7.15
Switzerland Fr	4.52	4.30
Taiwan \$	1.76	1.71
Yugoslavia Ddr	34.25	32.00

Source for small denomination bank notes only as supplied yesterday by Barclay's Bank International Ltd. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques and other foreign currency business.

Gold gained \$2 an ounce to \$151.875.

SDR-S was 1.15720 on Friday while SDR-E was 0.674241.

Commodities: Renter's index was at 175.21 (previous 174.94).

Reports, pages 24, 25 and 26

How the markets moved

Falls

Ass News	12p to 175p
Attock Oil	10p to 86p
BF	28p to 83p
De La Rue	15p to 34p
Dunlop	5p to 21p
EMI	5p to 21p
Fisons	6p to 34p
GE	7p to 17p
GR	8p to 32p
Health CE	12p to 32p
Imp Chem Ind	9p to 34p
Imp Cont Gas	15p to 37p

Rises

Latham J	5p to 125p
MMR Edges	6p to 225p

Equities fell over a broad front. Gilt-edged securities were in decline.

Dollar premiums 112 per cent (effective rate 39.98 per cent).

Sterling gained 5 pps to \$1.7177. The effective rate was \$1.8 per cent.

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IMF wants Rome pledge on controls

Rome, March 21.—To gain any further loan from the International Monetary Fund, Italy will have to pledge not to introduce any new exchange controls, price curbs or restrictions on credit which would have an impact on external commercial dealings. According to official Italian sources, any letter of intent sent to the IMF will have to contain such a pledge.

This pledge, which would be valid for the life of the loan, would bar curbs like the tax on currency purchases recently abolished, or the deposit on currency purchases to be phased out in April they said.

Mr Alan Whitmore, leader of the IMF negotiating team, has left Italy following finalization of the letter of intent, but the Government has not yet made it public, officials said.

Italy's main political parties and the unions.

Union leaders today restated their opposition to the curbs on automatic and negotiated wage increases which the IMF negotiators have insisted on including as a fundamental condition of the loan.

Signor Giulio Andreotti, the Prime Minister, is to meet union leaders tomorrow in the hope of reaching some form of consensus on this point.

The credit of 450 million special drawing rights (about £300m), is expected to be made available in three tranches, with drawings open until the end of next year. It will probably be repayable over three years, the sources said.

The pledge to abstain from exchange and other controls, which could artificially sustain the lira, reflected the IMF team's evaluation of prospects for a recovery of Italy's balance of payments if the conditions of the loan were successfully applied.—Reuter.

Court rules against cable groups' pacts

Final orders were made by the restrictive practices court in London yesterday declaring three trading agreements, at one time operated by manufacturers of telephone cables, to be contrary to the public interest.

It also ordered a stay of proceedings on a new agreement between four major manufacturers only which, it was said, had never been operated.

The "dead" agreements related to tenders for the supply of switchboard cable and external plant telephone cable to the Post Office, and to external plant telephone cable to purchasers other than the Post Office.

Parties to the switchboard cable agreement were AEI (Cables), Connollys (Blackley), Pirelli General Cable Works, Reliance Cords and Cable Standard, Telephones and Cables.

Eight manufacturers were parties to the other two agreements: BICC, formerly British Insulated Callender Cables, Connollys (Blackley), Pirelli General Cable Works, Reliance Cords and Cables, Scottish Cables, Standard Telephones and Cables, Telephone Cables, and Belfair.

The four parties to the "live" agreement, which concerned tenders for the supply of external plant telephone cable to the Post Office were BICC, Pirelli General Cable Works, Standard Telephones and Cables, and Telephone Cables.

Mr Francis Ferris, for the Director-General of Fair Trading told the court president, Mr Justice Mocatta, sitting with two members, that the proceedings arose out of a reference to the Monopolies Commission, in July, 1974, relating to the supply of telephone cables in the United Kingdom and the export of telephone cables.

During the course of preparation for that hearing a num-

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Hitachi plant plan for Britain puts Mr Varley in dilemma



100

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Stock markets hate uncertainty

A stock market which had convinced itself that it could live happily for the moment, with the Labour Government's policies, has been knocked off its perch. Hence, yesterday morning's sharp crack in the indices, though it is noteworthy that the early selling soon dried up.

Like everyone else, investors are now on tenterhooks, pending the crucial vote on confidence tomorrow night. One can trace this neurotic state of mind to a number of fears, even, ironically, fear of the Conservatives. For no one is yet clear about their economic and fiscal policies, let alone the monetary policy. That the Conservative Government could strike the same sort of bargain with the workforce that the Labour Government would ultimately have been able to agree with the unions.



Mr Ian Fraser, chairman of Rolls-Royce Motors: strong gains from sterling's fall.

But the overriding fear is that of uncertainty. Stock markets hate uncertainty, and there is going to be much more of it in the coming weeks than anyone had bargained for.

But at the end of the day, how much room for sudden manoeuvre would a new Conservative administration have? Not as much as it would like to think. The IMF loan terms will stand.

So, if much of the thinking behind the present bull market—easier interest rates, a relaxation of dividend restrictions and the hope that the Government would be able to come up with a wage freeze—has been thrown back into the melting pot, those investors prepared to weather a few stormy weeks should be justified in doing so. If the Government falls, expect the market to be volatile, but hopefully holding a "floor" of around 400 in FT index terms.

And if Mr Callaghan's administration survives and people start talking about the inevitability of an election, the market will be back to its old ways of behaving, the same sort of turbulence as we have seen so far this year.

Monetary items

Bank views

From the look of the first report from working party K of the Inflation Accounting Steering Group, the parties now considering the application of inflation accounting procedures to the banks find themselves awkwardly positioned between the devil and the deep blue sea.

On the one hand they have been bound—if somewhat tenuously—by their terms of reference, to consider any adjustments made to maintain the ratio of the banks' free capital to their monetary assets within the framework of ED 18.

Effectively that means that any adjustments made must be made below the line—not a concept to recommend itself to commercial bankers acutely conscious of the impact of tax on unadjusted profits, and personally jump about the effects of those self-same profits on public opinion. Hence the strong line taken by the four representatives from the commercial banks on the working party, in favour of a deduction to provide for the maintenance of their "free capital", in real terms, above the line.

On the other hand any move to exclude the banks from the application of ED 18—which the working party as a whole recognised as one solution of this dilemma—is in effect going to drive a coach and horses through the concept of a unified system of inflation accounting.

Thus the working party, while recognising that there is some force in the commercial banks' contention that their net

monetary banking assets are analogous to stock in trade, also recognises that the banks' position is only unique in being at one end of the monetary item spectrum. Other businesses may wish to carry net monetary assets, or be unable for reasons of prudence to refrain from doing so; and they too might reasonably lay claim to exclusion from the exposure draft.

With the nature of the dilemma thus exposed, the working party has taken the sensible course in heaving to wait for other options. But at some point in the next few months the hard choice will have to be made, for inflation is likely to be with us for a long time yet.

Turner & Newall

CCA sums

Turner & Newall has split the source of its profits further than the usual division of labour between subsidiaries and throwing in CCA adjustments for good measure.

The effect is to provide a much clearer picture of the improvement so far, and to show the crude reduction in group historic profits of £35.4m to £15.1m on CCA as a rather misleading simplification.

The surprise is that the strong recovery areas of last year, Ferodo and British Industrial Plastics, which helped the 64 per cent increase in historic profits, have not made only a mere real return.

That should mean that there is a considerable way still to go. The 20 per cent increase in volume in plastics followed a very depressed previous year and Ferodo should be just beginning a long haul to satisfactory profitability, while the £11m CCA loss in the TAC Construction materials subsidiary shows the real impact of working well below capacity.

The CCA reduction on overseas companies and from engineering components is not nearly so great, but had it not been for the exceptional cash inflows from the sale of shares.

With the FT 30 share index breaking through 420 last week and all the talk suggesting a run up towards the 450 level ahead of the Budget, Commercial Union was able to arrange underwriting for its Estates House Investment Trust bid on very tight terms. Yesterday's market relapse, however, left the underwriters' position looking rather less attractive. For though the shares came off the bottom during the afternoon to close at not far lower at 120p, they had earlier been down to 117p. That compares with an underwriting price of 114p, but before the offer closes the share price will also have seen the final dividend of 4.52p.

In Certain Teed and the £21m rights issue, there would have been a cash outflow last year when capital spending was only £14m.

This year £30m is planned plus a major acquisition in the United States, and although the increase in working capital is likely to be less than last year's £22m, the cash balances of £48m are going to be substantially run down.

Given that the timing of the share sale and rights issue have been less than perfectly fortuitous, T and N has been given the chance to do major counter-cyclical investment which current returns do not justify but which should be amply repaid when value increases.

Turner and Newall looks like a company on the verge of a substantial growth phase which is not discounted by the 9 per cent yield which the shares at 156p, plus a dividend of 4.52p, would have been covered on CCA earnings.

Accounts: 1976 (1975)
Capitalisation £124.4m —
Net assets £11.1m (£135.2m)
Borrowings £22.0m (£47.4m)
Pre-tax profit £35.4m (£21.6m)
Earnings per share 20.28p (15.42p)

Rolls-Royce Motors

Odd man out

Rolls-Royce Motors continues to be the odd-man-out of the British-owned car industry in that it actually manages to make a profit.

Spurred on by the news of progress in export markets, outside estimates have been steadily upgraded in the last month.

Like the cars themselves, however, it is evidently better to travel than arrive and after rising a tenth last week the shares eased up to 76½p yesterday on the 58 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £13.5m.

True, almost all the rise in profits came from buoyant overseas car markets, United States and the Middle East especially, with the rest of the business slipping back.

And though R-R itself is unwilling to quantify the benefits from sterling's frailty, it is clear that much of the difference between earlier market estimates of £7½m and the eventual outcome is down to sterling.

The current year won't see the same boost from sterling but against that R-R should be getting back its 7 per cent trend growth in output after slipping back to 4 per cent last year after industrial difficulties at its Willesden plant.

So far so good. But R-R is in a cash-hungry phase at present, as evidenced by all the recent funding operations, and as much depends on the look of the balance sheet as the trading outlook.

All we know in advance of next week's accounts is that borrowings have fallen thanks to last year's rights issue, cutting interest charges £1m or more along the way, while the £6m medium-term facility has not yet been touched. That coupled with cash flow and deferred tax of a similar amount has to be seen in the context of capital spending this year of £13m.

The historic p/e ratio of 8.7 could fall three points this year as the new big diesels come into their own and the new higher margin Silver Shadow model comes into full production, while the yield is now down to 2.7 per cent.

Final 1976 (1975)
Capitalisation £39.5m —
Sales £104.5m (£79.7m)
Pre-tax profit £9.13m (£5.79m)
Earnings per share 8.79p (7.16p)
Dividend gross 5.92p (5.38p)

For some weeks now accountants and industrialists have been anxiously awaiting word from the Inland Revenue on the subject of corporation tax. A consultation document was expected first in January and then in February; now the Revenue says that, although the document will be coming ultimately, it cannot say when.

Hopes in the City that the Revenue might reveal its position on the vexed question of taxing profits under inflation accounting have, however, been pitched too high. Contrary to general belief, it has never been the Revenue's intention to look into this thorny issue, although some talks have been held with accountancy bodies.

Its brief has been merely to investigate how the present temporary system of tax relief on stock appreciation, introduced in the Budget of November 1974, could become part of a permanent system. To allow plenty of time for consultation the Chancellor last year extended the stock relief scheme for a further two years.

But while it may look as though the Revenue is dragging its feet, there is not much reason for urgency. If the programme for introducing inflation accounting proceeds according to plan, the first companies will begin reporting current cost results for their financial periods starting after July 1 next year.

From then on the question

of stock relief will become immaterial, because taxable profits will be expressed on an entirely different basis. There is very little point in the Revenue devoting its time and effort to formalising a system which is half way along the road to inflation accounting when the real thing is only just around the corner.

The Chancellor's commitment to a more permanent form of stock appreciation relief has already caused deep confusion. It will persist whether the next Finance Bill is introduced by Mr Healey or a Tory Chancellor. The specific problem has arisen in the complex field of deferred tax—the tax that companies ultimately may be liable to pay, but not in the immediate future.

With effect from the beginning of last year the accountancy profession introduced a new accounting standard covering the part of their work known as SSAP 11. It required companies to show tax on their profits at the full rate before stock appreciation relief or capital allowances.

The standard had not, however, been tailored to deal with the huge volume of deferred tax which built up as a result of stock relief. It meant that a yawning gulf was opening up between the tax that companies actually paid, and the amount they had to show in their accounts.

Compared with a notional tax rate of 52 per cent most companies have been paying

well under 20 per cent, the rest showing up as deferred tax. In 1975-76, for instance, the Inland Revenue took £1,995m in corporation tax, while companies made gross trading profits in 1975 of £12,165m. No less than a third of these profits were made up of a rise in the value of stocks.

The Chancellor's indication that companies would not be expected to pay the deferred tax built up as a result of stock relief only served to emphasise the absurdity of SSAP 11. Some companies openly ignored it, despite the threat of an auditor's qualification to their accounts, and eventually, last October, the Conservative Committee of Accounting Bodies announced that it was postponing the standard and looking at the whole problem again.

Since then a growing number of companies have taken to adding back to profits the part of their deferred tax rate so that their effective tax rate was little changed from the present one, net of stock relief. But Phillips & Drew estimated that, if the Revenue stuck to its present 52 per cent rate, earnings would fall more sharply than profits—by 55 per cent last year and 50 per cent this.

For very rough and ready purposes it has been widely assumed that the amount of tax companies would have to pay under CCA would not be very different from the actual payments at present. To that

extent companies might already be viewed as operating an effective inflation accounting system for tax purposes. But even this much is far from clear. Too few companies have yet worked out what their profits would look like under inflation accounting for it to be possible to give any serious estimates of the kind of corporation tax rate that would be necessary to maintain the present income to the Revenue.

One which has, Sheffield tool group Record Ridgway, reckoned that if it paid tax on its current cost profits equal to those on its historic cost profits it would face a corporation tax rate of no less than 77 per cent.

On a basic 52 per cent tax rate, Phillips & Drew estimated that 40 per cent of its sample would not be earning enough to cover present levels of dividend. Clearly, if the rate was pitched higher, even more companies could be in dividend trouble.

The hope has been that Mr Healey would give companies some indication of where they stand in his budget speech, even if only in the form of general guidelines. He or his successor ought at least to make sure that the present Inland Revenue efforts with stock relief are not fruitfully diverted into the field of inflation accounting.

Christopher Wilkins

Eric Wigham

A timely call for synchronized pay settlements

The Confederation of British Industry is now discussing the first draft of a report intended to open a national discussion on the future form of pay bargaining. Unions affiliated to the TUC have for their part recently received a consultative document listing suggestions for changes in the TUC structure.

The two papers have no direct connexion and neither makes possible proposals for immediate action. That of the CBI, after it has been to its Employment Policies Committee, will be debated within the organization as a preliminary to talks with the TUC and the government and with the National Economic Development Council. The aim is to present it to the CBI's council meeting at the end of next month.

That of the TUC will be discussed at a special conference of two representatives from each union on April 28. In the general council will prepare proposals for the annual congress in September.

The papers have this in common: both consider what can best be done to remedy defects in the present system of wage settlement. The CBI is tackling basic questions over the wider possible field of "simultaneity" and "coordination" of wage claims. The TUC is facing criticisms from a number of unions of the way it handles pay negotiations with the Government.

The CBI's objective is to find something better than the present alternation of restrictive economic policies followed by an explosion and a few years of "grab-by-all", leading to economic crisis and yet another incomes policy.

The confederation's 60-page document covers the relationship of pay policy to other elements in economic policy such as taxation, the advantages of centralized and decentralized systems, the role of the Government and the CBI and TUC, public sector bargaining, implications for the social security system, the possibility of a new institutional deal with relative wages, the relationship of collective bargaining and employee participation and the possible synchronization of pay settlement dates.

Lord Warkington, president of the CBI, referring to the inquiry into the need for a single, unified synchronization of wage agreements for special mention. This reminded me that 10 years ago this month a conference of trade union executives approved a TUC general council report which said: "It may be possible for the unions concerned with major and significant claims to submit and negotiate them simultaneously after preliminary consultations among themselves and with the TUC."

This was the conference at which the union leaders, fed up with the statutory restraints of the Labour Government, decided to trust their own incomes policy. They also talked about a greater degree of unification of conditions, including minimum wage rates, the normal working week, overtime rates, annual holidays, supplementary pensions and sick pay. Through consultation between the TUC and CBI.

"This is the most fruitful set of proposals that has come out of any trade union movement in any country at any time," said George Woodcock, who was the TUC general secretary at the time—but little of it stuck.

Nothing more has been heard from the TUC of "simultaneity and coordination of wage claims", as Mr Woodcock called it. The TUC's members have talked about it among themselves from time to time, but considered the difficulties of accommodating different bargaining structures and timetables greater than the possible advantages.

Yet there is a strong case to be made for Mr Woodcock's view that synchronization would be a big influence in regulating the unregulated jungle of wage negotiations.

It would do a great deal more than stop leapingfrogging in major claims, which is probably what attracts employers most. Some of them are more interested in synchronization of local claims within a company or industry. The big ones, such as the Bankers' claims and various periods of the year, as at present, means that bargaining often takes place in different economic circumstances.

Coordinating wage claims would inevitably involve central

policies on both sides and, because of the relevance of taxation and social policy, the Government would have to be brought in. Free collective bargaining would take place within a coordinated framework. This framework would have to take account of special anomalies, which would involve a return to the idea of some form of relativities board.

How the framework was applied—for instance, whether to give priority to the low paid or to differentials—would be worked out within industries or companies.

Problems such as those of the Leyland toolmakers are not insoluble. Many companies have been introducing agreed job evaluation schemes which all concerned believe to be more or less fair. But, obviously, the more a wage structure has been allowed to get out of hand, the more difficult it becomes, particularly in times of restraint. If the TUC case for an accepted ratio between the pay

of top managers and workers were expanded to provide ratios all the way down the scale, that would help.

The main cause of trouble with incomes policies so far is that they have been introduced hurriedly to meet emergency conditions and have created anomalies and unfairness on the assumption that some time, somehow, it will be possible to return to the jungle of free collective bargaining. A properly designed permanent policy would avoid doing that because it would be based on agreed principles.

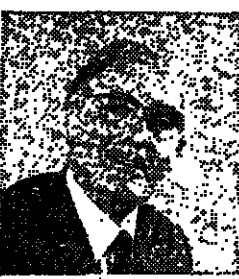
Reformed TUC structure, discussed in its paper, would help to bring that about by averting the resentment of small and middle-sized unions who feel they have not been properly consulted by the leaders of the big ones, who negotiate the social contract with the Government, though whether the big unions would regard a major change as acceptable remains to be seen.

Synchronization of claims would avoid the injustices caused by settlements coming just after a fixed vital date. Accepted pay ratios would stop both the unreasonable compression of differentials and the grievances of the poorly paid asked to exercise restraint while others are paid what sound like huge salaries.

It may be unlikely the CBI will put forward all these radical proposals or obtain agreement on them if it does. But radical changes are necessary if a fair and economic system of wage determination is ever to be achieved.

The fact that for two years both sides of industry have voluntarily accepted arrangements full of anomalies and injustices suggests that a permanent system, made as fair as possible, would be acceptable if a lead were given. A third phase of the present policy could be designed to move towards this.

County Bank Limited



"Professional guidance and financial support for British Industry on an expanding scale"

Extracts from the Statement of Mr. Sidney Wild, Chairman of County Bank, in the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1976.

It is pleasing to be able to report a strong uplift in profits from £2.29 million in 1975 to £4.27 million in 1976. After tax and after payment of dividends of £591,000 to the parent company retained profits of £1,561,000 have been added to reserves. The Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1976 shows total capital and reserves of £15.8 million and total assets of over £494 million. Gross revenue was higher again, attributable to a greater volume of advances (at margins which, on the whole, were a little finer than last year) and to increased contributions from the Corporate Advisory and Investment Divisions. I can, therefore, describe 1976 as a year of progress and consolidation.

Review of Divisions

Corporate Advisory Division again gained a very satisfactory number of new clients during the year and advised in a good proportion of the year's rights issues and merger and takeover operations.

Although the growth of our advances fell short of expectations in 1976, there are now signs of reviving demand for the services of our Finance Division. The main objective of this Division is the provision of term money for productive industry with an emphasis on capital investment and exports. During the year we have also continued our support for industry by making further investments ourselves in the equity of both listed and unlisted companies, and this aspect of Finance Division's activity is becoming increasingly important. We were pleased to have co-managed during the year a sterling syndication of £100 million for capital investment in the North of England, one of the few major sterling syndications of last year.

Several new funds were placed under the management of our Investment Division during 1976 and total funds under management are now in the region of

£900 million. Income from U.K. and foreign underwriting and dealing activities has shown a very gratifying increase. We have participated as underwriters in the majority of eurodollar bond issues in 1976, and we have also underwritten a substantial number of United States domestic equity issues.

Branches

All three United Kingdom branches—Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester—have made significant contributions to our business in 1976, and it is particularly pleasing that Edinburgh has achieved this during its first year of operation.

Aboard, we have opened a representative office in Dubai, and from this base we look forward to servicing our clients' requirements in the Middle East.

General

Interest rates have now fallen sharply from the peak levels of last autumn, but it seems unlikely that there will be any further substantial decline in rates in the coming months. I do not believe that the cost of borrowing on the terms we are now able to offer should be regarded by any progressive management as a deterrent to investment, provided other criteria can be satisfied. Inflation is still with us, however, and this continues to cast doubts upon the adequacy of real returns on capital investment projects, and must remain the prime target for action by the authorities.

As a growing merchant bank we are providing advice, professional guidance and financial support to British industry on an expanding scale. We aim to give our clients an additional and independent view when sharing with them the responsibility for reaching key decisions on financial and investment matters. We expect to have a busy year in 1977.

County Bank

11 Old Broad Street, London, EC2N 1BB and in Edinburgh, Leeds and Manchester
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Business Diary: Tomorrow's men • Isles full of noises

What odds the Government's surviving market strategy, confident—and, if they lose, what chance of cooperation with the unions?

Bumping into Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Hugh Scanlon, president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, at lunch yesterday, Business Diary's Ross Davies asked them what they thought. It was, after all, a function to mark the publication of the Mitchell encyclopedia, the Mitchell Beazley Joy of Knowledge Library, and who could pretend to greater knowledge of affairs than Jones and Scanlon?

A hoarse Jack Jones croaked that he preferred to wait and see, although earlier on he had said he was worried by the loss of his voice "in case there's a general election".

Scanlon said he was a pessimist by nature and was thus prepared for the worst, by which one can only suppose that he meant there would be a general election if not a subsequent victory for Mrs Thatcher.

Asked how he could possibly sell cooperation with the Government to his people when that Government was no longer Jim Callaghan's, Scanlon said that it wasn't a matter of personalities but of policies. Although one could presume what Mrs Thatcher's policies were, he for one did not really know.

Jones said that he thought they were likely to be Sir Keith Joseph's policies, rather than Mrs Thatcher's, and would involve public spending cuts more stringent by far than Labour's. To this Scanlon replied that

if there was to be a return to his bid, which of five in a recent year, involved no commercial purpose but the firm intention to consolidate the relationship and friendship between our countries.

Tension cable

Frank Mitchell was impressed by the reports yesterday that the Argentinian businessman, Francisco Capozzolo had "confirmed" negotiations at the highest company level to buy the Falkland Islands Company.

Mitchell is managing director of the company and said he knew of no such negotiations. One of the directors is John Dowling, chief executive of the parent company, Charrington Industrial Holdings.

Only yesterday morning Mitchell received a cable from yet another would-be buyer from Argentina, Cesar "Cao" Saravia, who has already once



FIC's Frank Mitchell: impressed.

been rebuffed. He affirmed that his bid, which of five in a recent year, involved no commercial purpose but the firm intention to consolidate the relationship and friendship between our countries.

Mitchell, a leading opponent of Argentinian claims to the Falklands, says that both Saravia and Capozzolo probably have pledges of financial support from the Argentinian government. Either offer is seen by FIC as an effort further to unsettle the 2,000 islanders, persuading them to emigrate ahead of some political deal between the Argentinians and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Any such sale of FIC, which owns nearly half of the Falklands' only substantial industry, sheep farming, would have to be cleared with the governor, James Parker, and with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office under exchange control regulations.

Even if the office, Charrington, and the Argentinians were party to a deal, there remains Robin Pitluga's Falkland Islands Sheepsowners' Association. It has first option to buy out FIC and, although Pitluga says that the association does not have the money, Mitchell is confident that City and private interests would weigh in to help.

Upmarket?

Down in Dallas, Texas, where the underconstructive Trammell Crow, one of America's biggest property developers, has his headquarters, the "file" marked "Survey Docks" London is being studied.

The cost of Crow's scheme

for a "merchandizing mart" (market) was put at £300m a year in 10 years, with provision for land and permissions. The project seemed all set, but with interest rates rocketing it was put on ice.

The word from Dallas is that although interest rates have continued to rise, it is time to come off the fence. Crow's experts also want to be sure that financial and trading conditions will remain reasonably stable for the 10 to 15 years they need to break into profit.

But the next few months could bring a decision one way or the other. Certainly increasing keenness for the scheme is being shown by the Greater London Council and the London Borough of Southwark, which now own the 136 acres involved at the docks and on which Trammell Crow has an option to rent.

Nicholas Knowland, the Trammell Crow marketing director in the United Kingdom, says that the idea is to invest £200m in a 1.3 million sq ft building in dockland for permanent trade exhibitions of home furnishings, giftware, clothing and household goods.

The total Surrey Docks scheme envisages a 6 million sq ft mart, plus 600,000 square feet of exhibition space. Eventually warehousing, offices, shops and hotels for the business visitor would be added.

Trammell Crow sees no clash with other United Kingdom exhibition centres such as the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham or the recently opened Wembley Centre, because these do not offer permanent trade displays. Not everybody would agree,

however. Crow's 1.5 million sq ft mart in Brussels is said to be taking over after two years' operation. Success in the London docks could well reinforce the attractions of the capital at Birmingham's cost.

Crowned colony

Four members of the Hongkong team which triumphed in the weekend final of the Institute of Bankers' International Banking Game fly home today. They take with them the Banking Game Cup and a cash prize of £500.

It is the first time since its inception in 1974 that an overseas team has got in to the final of the game, let alone won.

The game simulates, with the aid of a computer, decisions and their consequences for a branch looking for profit. The Hongkong team—John Menzies, Francis Burr, A. Fraser King and George Pearson, all of The Chartered Bank, and Dominic Ho of Rainier International—quite comfortably beat the competition from Bristol, the City of London, Preston and Leeds, emerging at the end of the day's play with a notional profit of £709,700.

"To ask the Secretary of State for Industry how many copies of Conservative Monthly News are purchased by his department to keep ministers and civil servants informed of current Conservative policy and thinking." (Commons question from Patrick Wall, Conservative member for Falkirk)
Answer from Leslie Hunkfield (Under-Secretary): "None."

Europa

Community's big four facing lengthy convalescence

Recovery is under way, but it will be some time before there is a complete return to health. This could be said to summarize the economic forecasts for the four larger countries of the European Community.

The barometer of opinion shows widely-differing readings in every country, which merely demonstrates how uncertain the estimates are.

One consequence of this is the wide range of growth seen for this year, which cannot be explained entirely by the differing bias of the forecasters. Increases in gross national product in West Germany—to give just one example—range from 3 to 6 per cent.

The latest forecasts are slightly lower than those of last month. The European Commission has drawn its own conclusions from this and revised its economic guideline for 1977 down from 4 to 3½ per cent—not sufficient to put the Community on a path for full employment.

For this reason the prognoses (particularly from government sources) are now more closely linked than before with a remedy, in other words with proposals for additional stimulation of growth.

WEST GERMANY: Despite continuing high unemployment figures, the federal government is still refraining from crisis measures, although most experts believe that its goal of getting unemployment down to

an annual average of 850,000 will be almost impossible. The government is sticking to its forecast of 5 per cent growth, despite high wage settlements, which will depress corporate profitability. Additional measures are only likely to be considered if growth remains substantially below this figure during the course of the year.

BRITAIN: The British are to the fore among those urging Bonn to take some action, for despite spare capacity the British Government's hands are tied, as far as expansion is concerned, by the country's undertakings to the International Monetary Fund. For this reason the forecasts of growth are so low that they would normally be described as stagnation.

British hopes are placed on North Sea oil and exports. Owing to the fall in the pound, British goods have become competitive, in spite of large price rises.

FRANCE: Paris is not offi-

cially putting pressure on Bonn, but the French government is another that would be glad to see its largest foreign customer doing more for imports. The government has recently revised its growth forecasts downward (from 4.8 to 3.5 per cent). Contrary to expectations by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the French hope to get their inflation rate down as low as 7.5 per cent, until the second half of the year.

ITALY: In Italy things are going better than expected and better than the government deserves. Instead of the zero growth prediction, other forecasters consider an increase of 2 per cent in gross national product possible this year. The federation of industries thinks a 3 per cent growth in industrial production probable in the second quarter.

Hans-Jürgen Mahnke

ECONOMIC FORECASTS FOR 1977

% Change	West Germany	France	United Kingdom	Italy	Japan	USA
Gross national product	4.5	3	0.9	0	8.7	4.3
Private consumption	4.5	3	0.9	0	13.7	10.5
Investment in plant and machinery	6.0	1.5	-2.5	-1.0	12.2	10.4
Exports	9.0	2.5	5.4	8.0	11.9	10.4
Imports	9.0	6.0	3.2	-1.0	16.1	—
Consumer price index	4.0	8.75	14.2	20	7.7	—
Wages	over 8	—	12.0	21-22	—	—
Unemployment (000)	850	—	1500	—	1200-1300	7.5%

(1) IFO Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, Munich (February)
(2) OECD (March)
(3) National Institute of Economic and Social Research (March)
(4) Government
(5) Government economic planning agency (January), for fiscal year March 30 to April 1
(6) Manufacturers Hanover Trust (March), nominal rates of change
— No figures available

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Shares reel under confidence vote and docks

The uncertainty created by tomorrow night's vote in Parliament, compounded by the threat of a national dock strike, proved too much for equities which had their worst day for five weeks.

Selling was not heavy and mainly professional, but some large and widespread losses were recorded and, by the close, the FT index stood 14.1 lower at 414.4 and at the bottom. Bargain-hunting and news that a leading firm of bookmakers had shortened their odds on a Government victory had brought a brief rally around lunchtime, but it was not sustained.

With the benefits of price increases now coming through, the market has raised its expectations from Associated Portland Cement, due to report preliminary figures today. The original profit target was set at £48m, against £46.6m, but some are now looking for a figure between £52m and £54m. The shares held up well at 188p.

In the gilt-edged market, most of the selling was concentrated at the short end, where it was described as "quite heavy". In spite of an attempted lunchtime rally, most "shorts" closed a full point lower. "Long" dates saw less business and by the end had managed to halve earlier losses which had stretched up to a full point.

The political uncertainty hit nationalization stocks like Swan Hunter, off 8p to 82p, Yarrow 10p to 20p and Robb Caledon 10p to 70p. But Hawker Siddeley held up comparatively well with a drop of just 2p to 51p.

The industrial leaders were hard hit in high yielding. Among the worst were Unilever

14p to 460p, Beecham 9p to 435p, ICI 5p to 349p and Fisons 6p to 349p.

The return of the Leyland toolmakers did little for the motors section with the share itself giving up 3p to 25p and Lucas being lowered 9p to 249p and Smiths Industries 5p to 132p.

Better-than-expected figures had Rolle-Royce just a penny off at 76p, a solid performance on the day.

The prospect of Japanese competition did nothing for RMI which shed 5p to 216p, while other electricals to lose ground were GEC 7p to 179p and International Computers which ended 5p lower at 200p.

Standing out against the trend was Rank which rose 4p to 190p.

After last week's strong rise, which sprang from the denied rumour that it was about to sell off its Formica business, De La Rue succumbed to profit-taking, dropping 15p to 345p. Elsewhere in papers, Rowwater gave up 10p, for a close of 190p.

Stores, strong of late on tax concession hopes, were not immune to the general slide, though Mothercare did manage to hold on to 254p. But others fell heavily with Gus "A" off

8p to 216p and British Home Stores down 6p to 179p.

In bids, Shellshare Price were marked up 4p to 44p on the terms from Blywater, while Trust & Agency was another firm on bid with a rise of 11p to 156p.

Awaiting further moves, Herbert Morris lost a couple of pence for a close of 150p.

Comment brought a number of scattered firm features like Pacific Copper, up 8p to 38p, Halmia Investment 4p to 22p and, after the chairman's statement, Tace where the rise was 6p to 151p.

The shares had the additional handicap of the Indian Election surprise. Here Warren Tea lost 13p to 145p, Assam Investments 8p to 80p, and McLeod Russel 15p to 200p. But Brooke Bond held firm at 52p.

Another hit by the events in India was Attock Oil which lost 10p to 86p. Elsewhere in the oil sector, BP was particularly hit by United States influences and closed no less than 30p lower at 834p. There was also big drops from Shell 8p to 500p, Ultramar 8p to 148p and Lasso 10p to 305p.

In a thin market, Turbullah Scott Shipping ended 45p to the good at 259p.

Latest dividends

Company (and par value)	Ord	Year	Pay	Year's	Prev
Beatson, Clark (25p) Fin	2.99	2.72	3/5	4.51	4.19
Coleman Trust Int. Dist. 2.0	1.78	20/4	—	—	—
Courtesy, Pope (25p) Int	0.5	0.75	16/5	—	1.33
R. Green Props (10p) Int	0.5	0.5	—	—	1.33
Jameson Chodis (10p) Fin	2.06	1.8	—	2.51	2.65
Lawrie (25p) Int	1.5	1.11	2/5	—	2.86
Low & Bonar (50p) Fin	6.5	2.1	13/5	9.75	6.93
Mila Masters (50p) Int	2.5	1.25	2/4	—	3.03
Harry Vincent (25p) Int	1.37	2.0	10/5	3.85	3.5
Rolls-Royce Mtrs (25p) Fin	2.2	1.65	25/4	1.95	1.65
Rights & Issues (25p) Fin	1.09	0.08	25/4	0.09	0.08

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross multiply the net dividend by 1.54. *On income shares. †On capital shares. ‡Adjusted for scrip.

Textiles are all the rage in the Low & Bonar camp

By Ray Maughan

The Low & Bonar Group is aiming to step up the pace of its textile division with an agreed £320,000 bid for Craiks, a Forfar weaving company. Acceptances in respect of 61 per cent of Craiks shares have been received for Low's three-for-one paper offer, of the alternative of £4 cash for every Craiks share.

The deal is likely to be swiftly followed by another takeover as the second stage of a textile development programme.

Textile operations were at the forefront of an across-the-board improvement during the year to November 30 last as pre-tax profits climbed 22 per cent to £6.58m. Demand from Nigeria and Zambia was particularly strong for Low's workwear and leisure clothing.

The current year offers varied scope for loss elimination and recovery. The troublesome Flotex floorcovering division made the anticipated £350,000 (against £689,000) loss during the year, although with very high depreciation and interest payable to the parent, its positive cash flow was still over £100,000. Orders are over 25 per cent up on their level 12 months earlier although the group is fully aware of the uncertainties in the housebuilding market.

Bibby & Baron, brought in for three months at a break-even position, suffered a £1m loss in its last full year, as an independent packaging group against a peak profit of £750,000 pre-tax in the year before that. Low fears, however, that full recovery will not be immediate.

Sales last year grew from £69.27m to £81.04m, in which Bibby & Baron contributed £59.7m. Tax increased from £2.64m to £3.59m, including £1m as a deferred charge. The shares slipped in yesterday where the earnings multiple is set over 6.6 and the total dividend up 13.4p per share to 15p gross per share yields 10.3 per cent.

Glasgow and Ldn stockbroking firms marry

The first merger of Glasgow and London stockbroking firms will come with the impending union from April 25, of Messrs S. M. Penney & MacGeorge of Glasgow and Messrs Castello & Partners of London. After their merger they will be known as Penney Castello with offices in Glasgow, London and Edinburgh. Messrs B. H. N. Carruthers and A. J. B. Agnew will be joint senior partners.

Both firms are themselves products of mergers over the years. S. M. Penney & MacGeorge was founded in 1845 as S. M. Penney. Since then there have been a number of mergers which have linked firms not only in Glasgow but also Edinburgh and Paisley.

R. GREEN PROPERTIES

Turnover for half-year to December 31 up from £52,000 to £1.06m, but pre-tax profits down from £152,000 to £122,000. Board expects year's results to top previous year's. Interim payment, gross, held at 0.77p.

Beatson Clark romps home as margins pull round

By Tony May

Another record year for the Beatson, Clark glass-container group looked like a big factor in the 106 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £514,000 at half time. And so it proves.

Although the pace of growth slowed to 50 per cent in the second half, profits for the period, at £1.1m, are higher than for the whole of last year. All this leaves pre-tax profits for the year to January 1 at £1.77m—a jump of 66 per cent on turnover only 21 per cent up at £14.5m, indicate an increase in margins from 8.5 to 12.2 per cent for the full year. One reason for this was the

price increase obtained in November; but the firm grip taken by the board on expenditure was also a big factor.

The company is raising the dividend from 6.45p to 7.09p gross, while earnings a share have jumped from 12.4p to 20p.

The outlook for the current year seems good with the directors reporting that demand both at home and in export markets continues "extraordinarily high" for all products. Other factors are a fresh increase in prices starting from April 1, and the likely restarting of another machine line bringing the total to 17, for the first time since 1974.

Bid for John Stephen

By Desmond Quigley

A bid of "not less than 4p" a share is to be made for troubled boutique chain John Stephen of London by Mr Michael Sobell, a group director. Mr Sobell doubled his holding in the group earlier this month with a further 29.9 per cent stake in Stephen from the receiver of fashion group House of Sears.

Yesterday Stephen's shares lost 1p to 51p, having traded between 31p and 7p over the last year. The group's assets

are in excess of 20p per share.

Former solicitor and entrepreneur bought into Stephen last year through a nominee group and subsequently joined the board.

The group's founder, Mr John Stephen, who resigned from the board last year on health grounds, is generally credited with having started the Carnaby Street fashion revolution in the "swinging sixties". However, the group is now but a pale image of its once brash and stylish self.

Now Bekhor plumps for options

A. J. Bekhor has gained

Stock Exchange Council permission to become the fifth London options dealer. A small, low-profile but wealthy, limited corporate member, Bekhor joins Sternberg, Thomas Clarke, Vickers da Costa, Seligmann Raynor and Teather & Greenwood in options dealing.

Although the Stock Exchange is not currently considering any other applications, several other brokers are believed to be very interested in this market.

The newcomer starts options dealing today. Its three main dealers are Messrs Don Mills, Philip Kitchener and Bob Holt, all of whom left Seligmann about a month ago.

The decision to approve more dealers of this type is seen as a "half-a-loaf" or "better-than-nothing" form of compensation for the council's decision to put on ice—perhaps permanently—the question of traded options in London in the style of the Chicago Board Options Exchange.

City opinion is sharply divided on the merits of a CBOE system, although the stated stumbling-blocks have been largely technical; but as Bekhor's chairman, Mr Jonathan Bekhor, said yesterday: "It would be nice to be in on the ground floor if Chicago comes through."

Even he, however, is doubtful whether traded options will ever cross the Atlantic, but the options dealing is an important attraction for many brokers, mindful of the equity collapse of 1974.

T&N to double UK investment following record year



Turner & Newall is growing and changing. In the UK more than 50% of our turnover is plastics based. In 1977 we will spend at home £20 million on plastics, automotive components and construction materials activities.

Overseas we will make substantial investments principally in automotive products and construction materials. Around the world and at home Turner & Newall is looking forward to a growing, changing and profitable future.

- * **Strong Recovery in UK**
Sales up 25%, profits more than doubled
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Up 32%
- * **Growth in Overseas Profit**
Up 33%
- * **Higher Return on Capital Employed**
Up from 14% to 18%
- * **Earnings for Stockholders**
Earnings per stock unit up 32%
Dividend covered 2.24 times

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Turners Building Products (NI) Ltd
Turners Asbestos Fibres Ltd
and 25 overseas companies

Drayton Montagu

The following companies managed by Drayton Montagu Portfolio Management Limited have recently published their Directors' Report and Accounts:—

- DRAYTON PREMIER INVESTMENT TRUST LIMITED**
Funds employed at 31st December 1976: £7.8 million
Dividend per Ordinary Share 6.0p (1975—5.4p), an increase of 11.1%
- DRAYTON COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT COMPANY LIMITED**
Funds employed at 31st December 1976: £4.4 million
Dividend per Ordinary Share 4.0p (1975—3.7p), an increase of 8.1%
- THE COLONIAL SECURITIES TRUST COMPANY, LIMITED**
Funds employed at 31st December 1976: £3.8 million
Dividend per Deferred Stock Unit 7.0p (1975—6.2p), an increase of 12.9%
- DRAYTON FAR EASTERN TRUST LIMITED**
Funds employed at 31st December 1976: £6.6 million
Dividend per Ordinary Share 0.80p (1975—0.75p), an increase of 6.7%

Copies of the Directors' Reports and Accounts may be obtained from the above Companies at 117 Old Broad Street, London EC4N 1AL.

Drayton Montagu Portfolio Management Limited

Managers of Investment Trust Companies, Unit Trusts, Pension Funds, Charities and other Institutional Portfolios
The Investment Division of Samuel Montagu & Co. Limited (Incorporating Drayton)

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FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Diversity and broilery upturn give Lawtex a good half

By Ashley Druker

Though the opening quarter inevitably was affected by last year's drought, business picked up later at Lawtex to give a first-half pre-tax profit of £212,000, against only £13,000. The board is resuming interim payments with 2.5p gross.

Sales of this Manchester-based clothing and umbrella manufacturer increased 47 per cent to £4.55m. The umbrella division has been working to full capacity, sales have been restored to former levels, and a good profit has been contributed from this traditional side.

At the same time the planned expansion of the other areas of the business in work-wear, leisure and baby wear means that some 80 per cent of group trading is now independent of weather vagaries. All productive capacity in its various sectors is being fully used; any shortfall has been made good by sub-contracting.

For the final stage to June 30, the directors say that strong order-books in all divisions reflect a continuous high demand. Without assuming a repeat performance of the opening half, they look to a good outcome for the full year. The company's best-ever was in 1973-74 at £401,000 pre-tax.

Though umbrellas were the basis of Lawtex's growth, turnover for the full year is unlikely to exceed much more than 20 per cent of the total against 50 per cent four years ago. But umbrellas still hold a "very substantial" market share.

Briefly

LOAN FOR JORDAN

Britain is to lend Jordan £5m to help its development plan for 1976-80. About a third of the loan will be spent on a water supply project for port and town of Aqaba.

COMBINED ENGLISH

Combined English Stores' associated company in The Netherlands, as agreed to acquire Berclow BV, a company established in Utrecht, for a cash consideration of 1.5m fl. (£375,000).

TRIANGO GROUP

On sales up from £938,000 to £1.27m for half-year to June 30, pre-tax profits jumped from £13,000 to £60,000. Board confident progress will be sustained. No interim dividend (same). Board has postponed decision on restoration of dividend on participating preference until year's results are available.

HARRISON'S MALAYSIAN

Harrison's Malaysian Rubber offer for Colson Hope Plantations accepted for 90.13 per cent of shares. Offer remains open.

CHAMBERS & FARGUS

Turnover for half-year to January 1 climbed from £2.55m to £3.12m. Pre-tax profit of £22,000, against loss of £7,000. No interim payment (same). Board feels conditions will continue to be difficult in short-term and forecasts a small loss by end of June, 1977.

FEARSON LONGMAN

Feardon Longman subsidiary, Westminster, Fresh is to acquire for a nominal consideration Thomson Organisation's 50 per cent interest in Evening Mail, Slough.

BRITRAILPEN-STANDARD

Chairman of Britrailpen has written to the ordinary shareholders of Standard Trust urging them to accept the offer by Britrailpen which, it is stated, will under no circumstances be increased. Chairman has also written to preference holders of Standard.

Ldn & European, New Bridge link-up talks

Market expectations earlier this month that London & European Group might soon have a change of control were reinforced yesterday. The company, formerly London & European Securities, confirmed that it is holding discussions with New Bridge Holdings "which may lead to a closer relationship" between the two.

London & European's market value is about £1.85m. One of the favourites of former years, it is in property investment and dealing and merchant banking. Dublin-based New Bridge Holdings is in a similar line of share dealing and property owning.

At half-time in October London & European saw a pre-tax profit of £870,000 give way to a loss of £870,000. The interim dividend was passed and a payment for the full year also ruled out. In a change of tactics it was then pulling out of investment banking and concentrating on the profitable property division.

First Fortune backs Moorgate Merc

Although it missed the Bank of England's "lifeline" when it became a victim of the 1973 financial crisis, the Moorgate Mercantile instalment credit group has now been rescued by First Fortune.

First Fortune has made £1.8m available to the group secured on its debenture assets and undertakings.

Since June, 1974, MM has been working under a scheme of arrangement with its creditors. The group's assets and liabilities are being sold to First Fortune.

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Graff has 93 pc of Sandstar

Holding now at least 93.1 per cent of the equity of Sandstar, Graff Diamonds announces an extension to April 7 of its 28p share offer. Sandstar, a private company, is owned by Mr Laurence Graff, chairman of Graff Diamonds, and his wife. To date some 223 shareholders have taken advantage of these arrangements for some 1.18m shares.

The offer at 28p was a fresh plan initiated in February to replace the compulsory acquisition scheme for the minority holdings. Instead there was an unconditional undertaking by Sandstar to buy on equivalent terms for a 21-day period any shares which holders wished to sell.

Miln prunes losses

After its record return for 1975-76, when pre-tax profits jumped to £572,000, the Miln Marsters Group has reduced its loss for the six months to November 30 from an abnormal £242,000 to £126,000. Turnover of this plant-breeder and seed specialist swelled from £1.34m to £2.25m.

Crop yields were lower because of the very dry conditions of 1976, but a "satisfactory" year is expected and the board expects to pay the maximum for the year. Meanwhile the interim is raised from 3.23p to 3.85p gross.

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Mr Laurence Graff, chairman of Graff Diamonds.

company Sterilin with the right in various tranches to take in the rest by January, 1984. Sterilin is in specialized medical interests. It is the largest manufacturer of single-use sterile products for medical and industrial use in Europe and is a major exporter. The price for the initial 20 per cent stake is £348,000 cash.

If a quotation is granted to Sterilin before January 1, 1984, Bibby will reduce its holding to 29.5 per cent and not increase it for two years.

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Jamesons keep up rapid growth

The Jamesons Chocolate confectionery group hotbed up the pace in the second half-year, and ends 1976 with a 70 per cent rise in profits to £594,000 before tax. Turnover went up from £3.6m to £4.5m.

The group (which is controlled by the Whitfield family and in which Trebor-Sharps hold 15 per cent) is raising its dividend from 0.06p to 0.48p gross out of earnings a share of 11p (6.3p).

The first half of the year took profits up 62 per cent to £255,000 while the second half brought a rise of 76 per cent to £339,000.

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Foreign Exchange

Sterling recovered 20 basis points from the lowest point touched during yesterday's trading on the foreign exchanges. It closed with a net gain against the dollar of 5 points, at \$1.7177 and size to be adjusted when there was heavy demand.

The yen had earlier advanced strongly on speculation that Japan might allow it to appreciate ahead of the world economic summit in May as a means of helping the world recovery. The pound, index closed at 61.8 against 61.9 on Friday.

Gold rose \$2.00 an ounce, to \$151.875.

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Discount market

It should have been a day of surplus on Lombard Street yesterday but money appeared to have been trapped somewhere within the system, and the Bank of England found itself called upon to give help on an extremely large scale. This it did by lending an extremely large sum to four or five houses overnight at MLR (10 1/2 per cent). Otherwise, it was a pretty quiet and uneventful session.

Houses made only limited progress during the morning with rates for secured money holding the 10 1/2-10 3/4 per cent area. Clearers looked a bit mixed. Some were modest callers, others seemed flat, while one or two had small sums to lend. After the help from the authorities, conditions were rather patchy with books being ruled off anywhere within a band of 9 1/2 per cent to 10 1/4 per cent.

Adverse factors included run-down balances brought across the weekend by the banks, a very small Treasury bill take-up, and a very small figure for increased note circulation.

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(continued on page 30)



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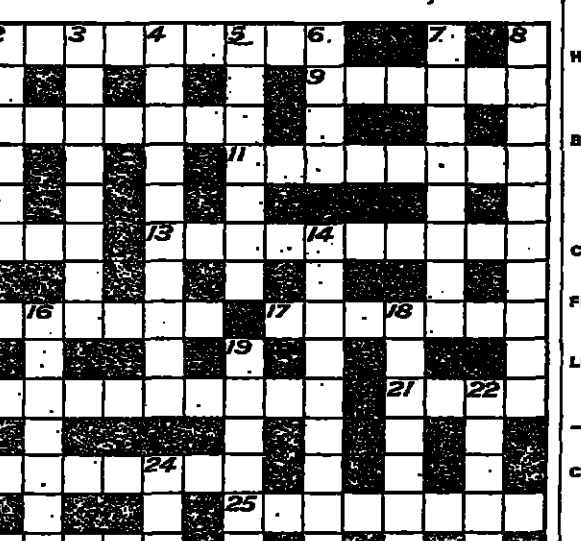
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BIRTHS

ALBION—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
BOTHAM—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
BURTON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
CHURCH—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
DAVISON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
ETTERTON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
GREEN—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
LUTON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
NAVY—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
NELSON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
MORROW—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
PIT—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
RODGERS—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
SCOTT—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
STILLING—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
STROVER—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
WILSON—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.
WRIGHT—On March 19th, at Linda's, a daughter, Victoria Jane.

The Times Crossword Puzzle No 14,556



ACROSS
1. Cause used to making feature-recorder (5-5).
2. More like Charlemagne's Roman Empire than Nero's (5).
10. About a hundred years producing this plant (8).
11. Silk taken from Kate's home—what sauce? (3).
12. Titanic finale for a composer (4).
13. Topping way to silence Bill's enemies (10).
14. Dear child from Dublin gives a puzzle to Anna at Holyhead (7).
15. Fisherman's kiss? (7).
20. To support dramatic charge in lower class (5-4).
21. All-encompassing intelligence? (4).
22. Catch by chance what is said on our side (8).
23. Port swallowed by unnamed Greek poet (8).
24. Nervous irritation (unnecessary if ship comes along-side) (6).
25. Restaurant said to give better accommodation? (5-5).

DOWN
1. Issue, for example, Corps raised (6).
3. Figure is not great when broken down (8).
4. Go on watch for favourite protector? (5, 5).
5. It brings bloodshed to an end (7).

MARRIAGES

GIVEN-WILSON MARRIAGE. On March 19th, at St. Mary's Church, London, the Rev. Canon G. Wilson married the late Mr. Patrick Wilson and Mrs. Mary Wilson.

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